Evangelical Christendom

"Known unto God are all His works in Christ."

January-March 1942

THE UNIVERSAL WEEK OF PRAYER

By DR. WILLIAM PATON

Secretary
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For ninety-six years the first complete week in the New Year—Sunday to Sunday—has been made the occasion of a united offering of Prayer in most of the countries of the world by Christians belonging to most of the divisions of the Church. The body which has brought this about is the World's Evangelical Alliance, which has devoted itself to the task of making this Universal Week of Prayer more and more widely known and observed throughout the world. So it has come about that during the week, which begins to-day, there will be an amazing multitude of people offering their prayers to God for the same things.

They will be praying for their own nation and for all the nations in this troubled world, for the reign of justice between nations and for the strengthening of rulers who try to deal justly. They will be praying for the homes and the schools of their own and other nations. They will be praying for the growth of the Church everywhere and for its life, purity, strength and courage.

I have just been reading through the list of those who have sent out this Call to Prayer to their fellow-Christians. They comprise most of those best known in the leadership of the Churches, and they cover all schools of thought. They are English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh, but the call will be heard and the Week of Prayer observed far beyond the limits of the British Churches or of the English language.

The summons to prayer is translated into a great many of the languages of the earth, so that in their own tongue Christian people of many races can join in bringing before God the same central and simple petitions. Let us look at some of these and consider in our imaginations what they mean.

Here is a translation into Japanese. Many of you will remember the very deep waters through which Japanese Christianity is passing just now, in the midst of the tensions created by the Chinese war and the growth in the claims made by the old national religion. Out of all that intense atmosphere of nationalist aspiration Japanese Christians will this week be joining their hearts in prayer with the rest of the Christian world. Across the China seas they will be joined in prayer by the people whose country has suffered so much at the hands of Japan, and yet has shown such splendid patience and forbearance. When I think of what the Chinese Christians have been through in the last three years and remember their courage and faithfulness, I am glad to feel that their prayers will be joined with ours in this coming week.

Here, again, is a translation into Arabic. That will be used in a part of the world much in our minds just now: the Near East, as we call it, that great region in the West of Asia and the North of Africa where the prevailing religion is that of Muhammad and the Arabic culture and tradition is still powerful. Here there are Christian Churches—Egyptian, Palestinian, Syrian, Assyrian, Armenian, some very old, going right back to the dawn of Christian history, some younger by far but alive and keen. We do not know very much about the effect of the war situation upon these Christian communities, but we can be quite certain that the world upon which they look out is not very easy and that they have

* A Talk broadcast from London (Jan., 1941) and repeated on the Overseas Transmission.

their problems and their anxieties to face.

Here is a translation into Zulu; here are others into the languages of East and of West Africa, Uganda, Kenya and the Gold Coast, Nigeria. I find something peculiarly moving in the thought of Afican Christians joining in prayer with those of the white races, just because they have suffered and still suffer so much at the hands of the white people. But their contacts with the white nations have meant their entry into the traffic of the world's life; they are being educated, not only by formal education in the school but by the impact of the world's life coming through the government, travel, industry and now again by the fact of war. There is a growing African consciousness and there is a growing African church life. All this new life contending with old difficulties will be thrown into the common prayer in which we shall join with them.

I have several Indian translations here; all the major languages of India will transmit the call to prayer. Nowhere in the world is the Church growing so fast as in India, save perhaps in Africa. Indian Christians will pray to God out of the midst both of great opportunities for Christian advance and out of much national anxiety and bewilderment.

So one might go on—the islands of the Southern Pacific will join with Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and Europe will call across the Atlantic to North America, where both in the United States and in Canada there will be great numbers joining in this common act of prayer. The islands of the West Indies will join with Latin America. And in much of Europe, of which under the conditions of war and hostile occupation we in this country can know very little, we can be absolutely certain that there also the common act of prayer will be performed, and barriers of ignorance surmounted by the interior life of the spirit.

What does it all mean? . . . It is when we ask ourselves how we pass from noble words of aspiration to realised and achieved fact that the significance of a world-wide effort of prayer becomes apparent.

It does so, I suggest, in two ways. In the first place, it stimulates and strengthens the life of that world-wide Christian community with which all its divisions and weaknesses, is still the main witness on earth to the way of love and forgiveness. No great change is ever going to come about in the affairs of men merely because the desirability of it is forcefully uttered. Change begins to be wrought when a living community demonstrates by act as well as by word the reality of changing and re-changing power. In so far as the Christian community, which let us not forget is by far the most inclusive and the most widly distributed of all human societies, is made really one in spirit, just in so far as it become a real force for world brotherhood, for international justice and social renewal and all the things of which we dream and for which we long. There is no way in which men so deeply become united as by prayer. If there is a truly united act of prayer in these days, the Church will be more united at the end of it than it was when it began. Moreover, it will not merely be united in an outward and official sense, but in spiritual reality and power. What a true Church has to give to the world is not blue-prints for future society but the power of forgiveness and the release from pride, fear and frustration into a new life. That kind of community has something to give to the world that is literally beyond price.

That suggests the second reason why the world-wide observance of a Week of Prayer should be important. It is just the power of Prayer itself. It is so easy to speak of this and so difficult to live a prayerful life that one shrinks from saying things that may sound hopelessly conventional. And yet if we consider both the words and the personal example of Christ there can be no doubt of the fact. Either He was a deluded fanatic—and if He were it is safe to say that the world would not be filled with the power of His name after nineteen hundred years—or He was right, and prayer is quite literally the mightiest of all powers that lie ready to man to use. It is so mighty because it is God's power and not ours; in prayer we become sharers, in a sense, in the life of God and He, on His side, has in His own wisdom made the doing of His will in a measure dependent upon men's prayer for it. It is difficult in this world of intense practical planning and striving to believe that real power lies not in these things but in prayer; in saying that one steps from one world into another and yet that is what Jesus meant. To believing humble faithful prayer, especially when the two or three agree concerning what they shall ask, He sets no bounds of accomplishment.

Headquarters Notes

1942.—This issue of EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM should reach our home readers before the close of the old year. We wish all, everywhere, a Happy New Year. It must be a new year of great events; it might even mean rapture to the saints. Let us all with renewed energies strive to be worthy of our high calling in Christ Jesus, and of the Empire and King we salute and serve.

Universal Week of Prayer. The outstanding feature of work at Headquarters at this time of the year is the Week of Prayer, the arrangements for which are complex, creative and universal. As we write, the correspondence and orders for literature coming to the Alliance House are in no way behind previous years. Our readers will be glad to learn we have even been able to arrange for the usual translations of the universal topics for Prayer into German. These, of course, will largely be in use by the German-speaking congregations in London and elsewhere; this translation is also being specially distributed to refugees in the interment centres. We thank Pastor Buesing and others for co-operation in this matter. We append some important information, and ask the attention of all concerned to the arrangements quoted:—

1. Central London Noon Meetings

The Lord Mayor of London, accompanied by the Sheriffs, will attend a Civic Service to open the Central London Meetings in the Church of St. Mary Woolnoth, Mansion House, E.C., on Monday, January 5th, at 12 noon. This service calls for the widest possible response from all able to attend. The address will be given by the Rev. S. M. Berry, D.D., Moderator of the Federal Council of the Evangelical Free Churches, and among others taking part will be the Archdeacon of London, the Lord Mayor's Chaplain, and the Rev. M. E. Aubrey, C.H. Over 400 Mayors have been communicated with, asking them to arrange a similar service locally. Many affirmative responses have already been received.

2. Broadcast Talk on Sunday, Jan. 4th

On Sunday, January 4th, at 4.45 p.m., the General Secretary of the World's Evangelical Alliance, Mr. H. M. Gooch, will broadcast a Talk on the subject of the Universal Week of Prayer. This talk will also be included in the Overseas transmission at a later hour. We shall be glad to hear from listeners overseas, and at home, as to how the transmission came through. Such communications must enhance the sense of Christian fellowship at a time when all manifestations of co-operation are valuable.

3. Local Secretaries—Attention Please

Local secretaries and others responsible for the arrangement of local united meetings are asked, if they have not already done so, to communicate at once to Headquarters (19, Russell Square, London, W.C.1) their requirements in programmes or other literature. To meet the request of the Postmaster General for early posting it is essential that applications should be received at once.

4. Come Yourself, and Bring a Friend

We append the full list of daily arrangements for the Central London Meetings, and impress upon all who can possibly do so the importance of personally attending one or more of the united meetings. It will cheer those in charge of the various Missionary bodies who have so cordially invited these central gatherings to take place at their headquarters. It should be remembered that in very many places, in some at the same hour, Christians of all nationalities will be meeting around the same topics for Prayer at the magnetic centre. May we not anticipate unusual response in the presence of unusual needs?

At Noon Daily, 12 to 1 p.m.

Monday, January 5th.—St. Mary Woolnoth Church, Mansion House, E.C. New Year Civic Service. The Lord Mayor of London and the Sheriffs will attend. Address by the Rev. S. M. Berry, M.A., D.D.

Tuesday, January 6th.—Central Hall, Westminster, S.W. Chairman, The Bishop of Fulham, Rt. Rev. B. S. Batty, O.B.E., D.D.

Wednesday, January 7th.—Livingstone Hall (L.M.S.), 42, Broadway, Westminster, S.W. Chairman, The Bishop of Rochester, Rt. Rev. C. M. Chavasse, M.C., O.B.E., D.D.

Thursday, January 8th.—Church Missionary Society, Salisbury Square, Fleet Street, E.C. Chairman, Mr. J. Gurney Barclay, M.A.

Friday, January 9th.—The Bible House, 146, Queen Victoria Street, E.C. Chairman, Rev. J. R. Temple, D.D.

Rev. J. Chalmers Lyon.—Our readers all will be glad to learn that the Rev. J. Chalmers Lyon has been chosen as Moderator of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of England for the year 1942-43. He will enter upon his duties next May. In addition to being the Free Church Honorary Secretary of the World's Evangelical Alliance, a post in which Mr. Lyon has rendered great service to the Alliance, both at home and overseas, he has rendered service with much self-sacrifice to many sister organisations, speaking on their behalf in London and widely separated parts of the provinces. The Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God all owe him much. The refugees also come forward to thank Mr. Lyon for his sympathy and practical help in their plight. He will fill the Moderatorial Chair with distinction, and we ask our readers to join members of the Council of the W.E.A. and others in Prayer to God that he may be "strengthened with might."

In Memoriam—Dr. R. C. Gillie.—It is a sad task to announce the sudden death of the Rev. R. C. Gillie, M.A., D.C.L., in London on Saturday, November 29th. Behind the announcement in *The Times* that "he served for many years as one of the Honorary Secretaries of the World's Evangelical Alliance," lies a wealth of service which might fill a book. Although in retirement at Bath, Dr. Gillie returned to London to serve his old charge, Marylebone Presbyterian Church, while the pulpit remained vacant, and it was actually on his visit to London to take the services the following day that he passed away suddenly—just the call, and he went. Dr. Gillie was present at the meeting of the Executive Council of the Alliance on the previous Thursday, and took lunch with members subsequently, appearing to be in his usual good health. The fact remains, we are left wondering: for him it is the vision most glorious, the reward most certain. Dr. Gillie's services to the World's Evangelical Alliance were spread over a long period of years. We have before remarked that he thoroughly believed in the Alliance, and spoke and wrote accordingly on every convenient occasion. Much is crowded into the following comment of a friend, and we endorse every word, and more:

"He was a most personable, handsome man. He had a real gift of speech. He was a man of more than ordinary taste in literature and a more than average scholar. These gifts were no temptation to him. He carried them off, without making any concession to them.

"A warmhearted and convinced Evangelical Minister, he was both by nature and by grace so urbane, so magnanimous, in the root meaning of the word, that he was at home with all the Churches in the land, and his life-long interest in Foreign Missions kept him aware always of the final business of the Church of Christ.

"Finally, and perhaps this is the highest praise of all—he was a brother greatly beloved."

Religion in Our Schools.—The Council have been giving close attention to the subject of Christian Education. Do our readers realise how much depends on the issues from this question, discussed in Parliament and difficult to determine in the light of differing ideas and ideals. We append the Council's Resolution, which is being sent to all responsible authorities:—

"Resolved that, convinced of the need of true Christian Education based on the authority of the Bible, in all the schools in this country and throughout the Empire, and deeply concerned by the prevailing ignorance of the Holy Scriptures among our children and people generally, the Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance (British Organisation) warmly support the action in this matter taken by the Archbishops of Canterbury, York and Wales and the official leaders of the Free Churches in approaching the President of the Board of Education and unitedly urging the paramount importance to our country of the education given in our schools being of a definitely Christian character, instruction being given by teachers who have themselves experienced its value and have been trained to communicate it to children. As an interdenominational Society they rejoice in the change which this united effort signifies, and recall the advice given by a previous Minister of the Crown to separate deputations organised by the Church of England and the Free Churches to the effect that the Churches should compose their differences regarding the kind of religious education which should be given before making recommendations to the paramount authority. The necessity and urgency of the present time has produced this united effort, and the Council would venture respectfully to urge the Prime Minister and His Majesty's Government to take immediate steps —by legislation if necessary—to make the giving of effective Christian Education a vital part of the curriculum in all schools under Government control.

"The Council further appeal to all local

authorities, Christian ministers of all denominations, parents and teachers, and Christian people everywhere, to seek to further by personal influence and co-operation the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make wise unto Salvation."

The British Government and Moslems.—Our readers are aware that the Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance have vigorously opposed the project to grant £100,000 to provide a central site for the erection in London of a cultural centre for Moslems, to include a mosque. Communications to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and other Crown Ministers protesting against this decision (only scanty information concerning it has so far been available) have been courteously acknowledged but vigorously treated. As we write, a letter of protest from California comes to hand, one paragraph of which says:—

"We cannot conceive that a Christian nation, like England, would, especially at this time in the throes of war, build this temple in the very heart of the nation for people opposed to Christianity."

The United War Prayer Meetings.—Since our last issue three more meetings for Prayer for Victory have taken place at the Central Hall, Westminster. These meetings are for the present taking place at noon. We give brief reports by our Special Commissioner.

October 7th

An opportunity was again afforded by the Alliance for Christian people, representative of all branches of the Church of Christ, to meet together for Prayer, and in the Name of our Lord and Master to lay before God the need of our own Nation and our rulers, that Divine guidance might be given to them in all the momentous decisions that they are called upon to make, and also the needs of the enslaved nations that the forces of tyranny and evil might be overthrown, and that righteousness might soon triumph. It was a privilege and joy of have as chairman the Rev. Dr. W. Wilson Cash, who so soon was to take up the duty of his high office as Bishop of Worcester. The Rev. A. M. Chirgwin remembered Dr. Cash in prayer that he might be given guidance and be assured constantly of the Divine presence with him. The Rev. Sir Charles Bentinck, formerly British Minister in Abyssinia, was also present, and led in prayer, and offered thanksgiving to God for all His mercies. The Rev. Dr. J. W. Ewing read the Scripture portion, and at the close of the meeting Mr. Martyn Gooch (General Secretary of the Alliance) guided the intercessions of God's people in which thanksgiving played a prominent part, thanksgiving for the righteousness of our cause, and for the assurance of victory, thanksgiving for the unity of the Empire, for the courage of our seamen, for the skill and valour of our airmen, for the bravery of our soldiers and the men of the defence services, and for the wonderful spirit of our people. There was also, and rightly, humble confession of our sin as a Church and people, and prayer for pardon and for power that the Church might in future days be more united, and used in leading the nation to national repentance and faith in God.

November 4th

Sir Charles Bentinck K.C.M.G., presided on November 4th, and said:

"We have come here to pray for our country at this great moment, and we know that in praying we are praying to a God 'Who is always more ready to hear than we to pray, and is wont to give more than we desire or deserve.' I would refer you to three well-known passages in Scripture. Phil 4. 6: 'Be careful for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.' Romans 8. 26: 'We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.' Matt. 18. 20: 'For where two or three are gathered together in My Name there am I in the midst of them.' And as we lay our petitions in trust before our loving Heavenly Father, let us remember that the Lord Jesus is in our midst, the silent listener to our petitions, and let us believe also that the Holy Spirit is guiding us that we may pray in accordance with the will of God.

"Prayer is a difficult experience, though it is most essential, and it is within the reach of any child. When the whole Empire is united both in prayer and in work, may we not expect blessing? I would take four examples from the Old Testament, for we can always learn from examples, though Hitler tells us that we have never learned anything yet!

"The first is the case of Sodom. You remember that ten praying people could have saved Sodom, but instead, Lot's warnings were treated as a joke. You remember when the Philistines were pressing the Israelites. They came to Samuel to pray for them; they were evidently so steeped in idolatry that Samuel had to pray for them. And we read that Samuel prayed, and the Lord heard him. You remember, too, the story of Hezekiah when he was threatened by the Assyrians, and he sent for Isaiah, and they laid their petitions before God. Hezekiah was not lazy. He took all necessary and reasonable precautions for the

defence of Jerusalem, and, as you know, God delivered Jerusalem on that occasion. And the fourth instance, to which I would refer, is that of Nineveh, when the king and people repented of their iniquities, and the city was spared.

"There are more than ten people praying here. There are multitudes throughout the world who are praying. The Church militant is praying, and we believe we are joined by the Church triumphant, or, as St. Paul puts it, 'the whole family in heaven and earth.' And, unlike Israel, who had to go to Samuel to pray for them, we dare to approach our loving Heavenly Father through the merits of 'the full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice' of Christ.

"Let us then pray and work. We know that God can work miracles, and does not need our assistance. But in the miracle of the loaves and the fishes we know that the Lord Jesus called for human co-operation, and then He wrought the miracles. The loaves and the fishes were blessed in His hand. So let us bring to Him our loaves and fishes, all that we have, our souls and bodies for Him to bless, and to use in His service. Let us, by His grace, dedicate ourselves afresh to Him that His will may be done in us, and in our beloved country. We all of us have need of repentance, national and individual repentance: we need to repent of our self-righteousness, of having so often crowded God out of our lives, and gone our own way. As we have just sung, 'For frantic boast and foolish word, Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord,' do not let us forget the blessings we have enjoyed in the past. As a nation we have been greatly blessed spiritually as well as materially. We have enjoyed great prosperity. And we have, perhaps, at times been 'drunk with sight of power, and loose wild tongues that have not thee in awe.' We have enjoyed religious freedom. May we ever keep and enjoy that priceless gift. We have a great Empire, and a great responsibility. And last, and certainly not by any means least, we have a King and Queen who set an example to their subjects.

"As we lay our petitions before God, let us trust in Him with all our hearts, and pray for grace to do His will and our duty. And may the Holy Spirit direct our prayers that we may be led to a brighter morning, to a national spiritual awakening, that the glory of the Lord may be revealed in our beloved land."

"Thou hast permitted us to gather together this day, and to offer to Thee our common prayers and supplications. We thank Thee for the knowledge and consciousness of Thy presence with us. Receive us as now again we dedicate ourselves to Thee, and to Thy service. Go with us in the power of Thy Holy Spirit as we return to our manifold works in the world, and help us by our life and labours, as here by our prayers, to advance Thy Kingdom, to show forth Thy love and grace, and to witness fearlessly for Thee." The words of this beautiful prayer offered by the Rev. R. F. V. Scott at the close of the meeting for prayer on November 4th found an echo in every heart. Others who led in prayer at the meeting were the Rev. Colin C. Kerr and Mr. W. McAdam Eccles. Our King and Queen, our leaders, upon whom there rest so great responsibilities, the men serving in the Forces of the Crown, our allies in their fight with us for freedom, and for those in the occupied lands suffering under the heel of their oppressor—all these were remembered before the Throne of Grace, and at the Noon Watch which was observed at the opening, hearts were bowed in silent prayer for the blessing of God upon our nation and our nation's cause.

Tuesday, December 2nd

Individual and national needs, both spiritual and temporal, were brought before the Throne of Grace at the meeting for prayer held in the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W. There are many things in these days which tend to shake the foundations of life, and men and women need to be sure about God, and to look beyond the chaos of history to the glorious triumph of God. The Church has a vital part to play, as the bearer of God's truth in the world, but the Church can only play her part worthily by manifesting that fellowship within her borders which can transcend all those barriers which tend to separate.

A representative platform supported the Bishop of Chelmsford (the Rt. Rev. H. A. Wilson, D.D.), who occupied the chair, and those taking part in the offering of prayer were the Rev. Dr. R. Bond, the Rev. W. F. Chadwick, Mr. Arnold Clark, the Rev. H. Hill, and the Rev. W. H. Aldis. "Bless the cause which Thou hast given us to undertake." "We pray for those in distress of mind and body, prisoners of war, those suffering in concentration camps, and brutally oppressed, the bereaved and the homeless, the wounded and the dying." "Forgive those sins which disfigure our national life." Such were some of the petitions. Mr. H. Martyn Gooch (General Secretary of the Alliance) read the Scripture portion, and he spoke with appreciation of the fact that several secular papers were now regularly printing a daily text of Scripture, and mentioned the fact that Lord Caldecote had consented to supply daily to a London morning newspaper a daily best thought in the form of a specially chosen text from the Bible. Mr. Gooch also referred to the new poster issued by the Alliance, which would be seen posted up in London. He asked for prayer that its message might reach many hearts.

THE NATION AND THE WAR

I.—The Weapon of Prayer*

By the Rev. ARTHUR TAYLOR, M.A.

Rector of St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, E.C.

One of the things for which we should be always specially thankful is the gift of Prayer. It is a consolation wherewith we bring our hearts back to faith and courage, because we are satisfied that we are not alone in the problems which we have to face; but that there is One to Whom we can turn with perfect confidence, because He is the God that answers Prayer.

Prayer is a great mystery, difficult to analyse, difficult even to describe from personal experience; and yet, though it be so great mystery it is, thank God, a great reality. The difficulty of it we all know. None of us, I am sure, ever feels that Prayer is easy. It requires, for one thing, a perfect relationship between ourselves and the God Whom we approach, between a perfect Father and a very imperfect child; a child imperfect in experience, in loyalty, in understanding, and in love. The nearer that child draws to perfection, the nearer he draws to the perfect Father. The Father is perfect; He is not One to Whom the child can go with some foolish request in the expectation that a fond Father will grant what the child foolishly desires. The perfect Father is the source of all good giving, and of every perfect gift. Nothing that comes from Him can ever lack either the perfectness of its intention, nor the purity and the soundness of its giving, and its gift.

So we come to God, sometimes alone, in the quietness of our own hearts, of our sorrows, and of our joys, and we find ourselves enriched by the sense that we are already, in that very act, imperfect though it be, drawing nearer in our likeness to God, Who has revealed Himself to us in Christ Jesus. Sometimes we gather in a family group, bringing before our Father the problems that confront us in our common life, the problems which we have to face, because we belong to the human race, because we belong to a country, or empire, or, it may be, in a smaller degree to some other grouping, and we bring the peculiar problems of the moment, and we lay them before our Father in Heaven. We do not, we dare not, assume that anything that we might ourselves desire, or express, could alter either the character, or the desires of the eternal God. His purpose, like Himself, is eternal. His righteousness does not change, nor does His mercy falter. Even Balaam said "God is not a man, that He should lie, and depart from the truth; nor the son of man that He should change His mind." It is not that we come before Him to ask Him to change His mind. But we do ask Him for His blessing upon our thinking, and our acting; that He may, by His Spirit, bring us more perfectly into unity with Himself, and make us to understand more perfectly what His will is, and may give us also the desire and the willingness to conform our thoughts and our deeds to the pattern of Himself. God's righteousness is my hope; that cannot fail; it may, in His inscrutable wisdom, be delayed in its fulfilment in the hearts and lives of men and nations. That is not because of God's failure in righteousness, but in man's unwillingness to respond. But that righteousness cannot be turned aside; and as we pray we must be found on the side of God's righteousness.

That righteousness shows itself in two ways. We, with our human limitations, find it very difficult to blend rights with mercies. Rights are cold, impersonal things; and the mercy is something that is altogether personal. When we, in our turn, try to understand the love that is demanded from us, we have to thank God that in Him that which is seemingly incompatible in the human mind is perfectly blended. There can be no righteousness which is not merciful, and there can be no mercy which is not righteous. So we pray, conscious of our own unworthiness. We cannot come before God, and ask,

* Address given at a united War Prayer Meeting, Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.

because of our own merits, that we should be blessed of Him. We are only too conscious of our lack of merit, of our failure, of our sins. But again we remind ourselves that the Sun of righteousness shines upon the evil as well as upon the good; and that the rain of mercy falls cleansingly upon the unjust as well as upon the just. So we pray at this time, increasingly, I believe, as we realise the gravity and the solemnity of the times in which we are living, that God's righteousness may be our righteousness; not that our righteousness should be the standard of His righteousness that we should not put our faith purely in things material, but that there may be the blending of the material with the spiritual, and the purifying of the material by the spiritual. So we shall find increasingly the removal from our hearts of those things which are unworthy of the children of God.

Again, we will not, we dare not limit God's gracious answers to our prayers, even to those things which seem to us to be in accordance with His will. He works in His own way through this imperfect channel, which is our humanity. He does not deal purely with principles. Rather, He seems to be most evident to our senses when the mystical illusions are taken away. The few and faithful are great and mighty with the Lord of hosts. He does work quite obviously with the faithful, and with humanity, and with human enterprises. That is what our Lord did when He founded His Church, and sent it on its way to proclaim its message to mankind. So we can pray for God's blessing upon our activities, upon our enterprise, as well as upon our intentions. And we will not limit in our thought that which we pray for.

God's righteousness is something apart. We pray that we may be quickened as a people, and that our hopes and activities may be blessed because they are according to God's righteousness. We pray, too, that that righteousness may work a miracle now, or when it shall please Him, perhaps in a way which we cannot foresee, and which, when it comes, I hope we shall not fail to recognise. Because of our foolishness, and our sins, God might even deal with us in chastisement; but it will be the loving chastisement of a Father Who loves His child, in order that we may pass through a period of penitence, leading to forgiveness. So we must bear the burden of our sins, as far as it is according to His mercy, for it is only that He may bring us back to where we should be. And so to the Eternal Father we turn again in perfect confidence. We are confident because of our faith, and our faith is built up in Him Who gave us His Son to be the Saviour of the world.

II.—The Weapon of Trust *

By the REV. R. F. V. SCOTT, M.A.

Minister of Columba's Church of Scotland, Pont Street, London, S.W.

We all know the difference that there is between the man who believes in God and the man who trusts God. I believe the difference is most often brought out as the fruit of Prayer. It is the man whose religion really and truly lives in Prayer who very soon begins to have, and have increasingly, that real and living trust in God which just makes all the difference; and a trust in God that does not depend, if I may so put it, on the outward and apparent success of his prayers. His prayers for this and that may not apparently be granted. There may not come for him sudden and logical interventions from God. He may have to confess much that is difficult and hard and often be brought to the edge of despair; but the more he goes on praying, the more he begins to know that the will of God is best; and the more he begins to trust in God far above and beyond all that God may do for him, just because of what God is and what His holy will declares itself to be.

In these days this is a matter of tremend-

* Address delivered at a united War Prayer Meeting, Central Hall, Westminster S.W.

ous importance for us as individuals and as a nation. One of the greatest weapons wielded by our enemies is the weapon of mistrust. In front of every other weapon that he possesses this weapon acts and is used with deadly effect. In front of his infantry and his mechanised columns and his tanks and his dive bombers goes this barrage of mistrust. They say that truth is always the first casualty in war, but truth was a casualty with the German folk long before the war began. With the casualty of truth came mistrust; and that barrage of mistrust has enabled the enemy to separate his enemies from one another because they would not trust. That separation was what weakened them and made them an easy prey for him. Not only that: he has often put over some barrage of mistrust within the nations, so that where there ought to be perfect unity and perfect trust there has often been suspicion and jealousy and discord.

What are we to put against this mighty power of mistrust? Surely not merely a trust in ourselves. It is not wrong that we should have some trust in our nation and our Empire and our Forces of the King. We are all thankful to God at this moment for the marvellous things that these men of ours are doing in the sky and elsewhere for us; and may God uphold and sustain them and give them all that coolness combined with daring that makes them to be feared by the enemies of righteousness. But it is not sufficient that we should have a trust in ourselves or in our Forces. If we are going to win this war, beneath all that is going on with bombs and planes we have to put a trust, a trust that will stand firm and sure whatever happens, a trust not in ourselves but in the living God, made known to us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A trust, I say, firm and sure whatever happens; for you remember when God gave us that greatest revelation of Himself, it was in a lonely Figure kneeling in a garden and praying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me—and yet, Thy will be done." The answer to the first prayer was No; and that solitary Figure had to go His way right to the bitter end of the Cross, and even He in the darkness had to cry, "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" We must not be surprised if sometimes we, whose faith is weaker and whose insight is dimmer, are led in dark places. But it is there, if we keep on praying, that our trust will become firmer and surer.

And what is true of the nation as a whole, is true of every one of us as individual men and women. It is the life that is most definitely committed to God in complete trust that is the only life worth living in this tragic world of to-day. For that is the life that our enemy with all his power is never going to upset, is never going to destroy; for it is not drawing its power, it is not drawing its being from any human and changing source, but from God Himself.

There are a couple of verses in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, chapter xvii, where he says something like this: "The man who has no trust in God is like the heath in the desert, and he does not know even when good cometh." "Like the heath in the desert." He has got such a shallow root that it can only thrive when everything is good, and when the season is at its very best. Only then can it spring and flower and bear its fruit. And that is those we are against today. Their empire and their power are founded only on the shallow passions and desires of men, and they can only thrive by success. Once they are checked, as we can check them, their weakness will be revealed. "But," says Jeremiah, "the man who trusts in God is like a tree planted by a river, and he shall not know when the bad season cometh, but his leaf shall still be green, and he shall still bear his fruit." Oh! let us be like that, the tap-root of our prayers to the very source of the Water of Life, that even in the bad season, when everything seems to be against us, our tree, the beloved tree of Britain, shall still be green, and we shall still bear the fair fruits of life.

III.—Rest and Reality*

By the REV. W. E. SANGSTER

"Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away and be at rest." These words from the 55th Psalm, have been in my mind frequently of late. They have been put there, I fancy, by some people I have been meeting, who have been indulging in wishful day-dreams, and who have been wondering if it would be possible for them to escape from the troubles of these present times, and who have been pondering on possible places to which they might go, and so to escape from the press of this conflict. Some of their hopes are strange indeed, like the woman who said the other day, "If only I could go to sleep, and wake up when it was all over!" There are others who have been speculating as to whether there are any parts of the country that are really undisturbed by bombs. One does not feel any sense of superiority to them, even though one would not live in any other place than this much-bombed city; but one does sympathize with them in the nervous strain to which they have been subjected, and fully understand just how they feel, with the psalmist, in wishing they could have the wings of a dove that they might fly away, and be at rest. And yet, it is, of course, a fantasy; it is plain that they cannot do it; and it is important that we should say clearly to those people that it is not thus that they can find rest; that there is no deliverance for them in geography. If they went to America, to a country that we know to be friendly to us, but not yet belligerent, even there they would not escape from the Press and the Radio, both preoccupied with war news; and they could never cut the love of England out of their hearts. They could not find the rest that they seek that way. I am reminded of a woman in one of my Churches, who had a nervous breakdown. She was taken by her husband to the doctor, and the doctor said: "You know she needs a change. Take her to Torquay." He took her there, and the first night after their arrival, she said to him in the hotel, "Oh, I do feel bad! This place does not suit me; I must go home." And home they went. When they visited the doctor again, he said, "She certainly needs a rest; try Switzerland." So they went to Switzerland, to Lucerne; and they saw Pilatus and the Rigi, and they went for one trip on the Lake; and then she said to him, "Oh, I do feel bad! this place does not suit me; I must go home again." And home again they went. The third time they visited the doctor, and he said, "Try a sea voyage; take her to South Africa; give her three weeks afloat." They went to South Africa; and the husband told me afterwards, that they went to Durban; and when they landed, they went into the Art Gallery, and she sat down, and ten minutes later, she said, "Oh, I do feel bad! this place does not suit me; we must go home again." You see, my friends, that poor soul could not escape her troubles because they were not really in her circumstances; they were in herself, and wherever she went she took them with her. If we would be wise in dealing with people today, those who who do not believe in Prayer, or who do not practise it, we must make it clear to them that their concern is not only or chiefly with circumstances; that their peace, and so much else in life really depends upon their relationship with God.

There are people who think that their distresses are in the mould of circumstances; they do not believe us when we say that "you can have peace even in war;" they do not see the spiritual implications of the mariner's word, who tells us that there is a central spot of calm at the heart of every typhoon. My friends, if you had the wings of a dove you could not go anywhere and really be at rest. But the wings of Faith and of Prayer, the wings that have brought you here today, the wings that have led some of you to give up your lunch-time in order to unite with others in beseeching God on behalf of our national cause at this time, those blessed wings will bring you into peace.

I was in Derbyshire some time ago attending a Committee, and I was passing Chatsworth House. There is a Girls' School there now of which I was once a Chaplain. But I remember Chatsworth House before a School was established there; and what a lovely mansion it was! You could go round it at any time for a shilling, and you could view the gardens and the treasures there. But

* Address given at a united War Prayer Meeting, Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.

every little while one came across a notice; they were rooms that you were forbidden to enter because they were "reserved for the family." Yes, the family were in residence; and they had their own private apartments. There are spiritual implications here too. There are rooms in the Father's House "reserved for the family," rooms into which by faith and prayer you and I may enter, rooms where the conversation is intimate, where you can pour out your needs to God, where you can see to it, as Isaiah said, that "we who are the Lord's remembrancers will give Him no rest." Go frequently to the rooms "reserved for the family"; do not just wait for this monthly summons to this united meeting. Continue, I pray you, constantly in Prayer; believe that God's ear is open to you when you pray.

I know the kind of reply that some would make to all this. They would say, "You began your message by warning people against the folly of supposing that they could go anywhere and escape the distresses of the times in which we live; you said that they were living in a world of fantasy, and that there was, really, no escape. And now you talk about these rooms 'reserved for the family' and stress the importance of Prayer. You seem not to know what is the non-Christian psychologist's comment on that: that it is only another form of escape, and just as foolish. They say that this idea of the Fatherhood of God is something which we have just built up ourselves out of our experiences of human parenthood; and they say that our ideals of Heaven are just an escape mechanism made by us because we find the world an inhospitable place. That is how they talk. They say that religion (and Prayer in particular, is just an escape. I would rather say this, that Prayer is not an escape from life; it is an entrance into life." Religion is not a flight from reality; it is a means to reality. This world with all its wickedness, and sin, and mass-murder; this mad world is not the real world. The real world is where the Father holds sway, the Father with a moral purpose, the Father Whose plans can be thwarted, but not ultimately defeated. That is the real world; and the doorway into that world is this doorway of faith and prayer. When they say, "It is a flight of fantasy," we say, "No, it is a march to reality."

In the real world our Father dwells. Trust in Him. Enter into that world by Prayer, and constrain others to come into it, too.

There is a world within the world, a world where God holds intimate communion with us, and it includes rooms "reserved for the family." I say to you: "Live that kind of double life; there is not anything selfish in it. The best thing that you can do for your fellows in all the troublous times in which we live is to go to the room "reserved for the family" that you may there be refreshed and then go out into the world, to sustain others in the difficulties that they are suffering, with the reserves that are yours in Christ.

Shelley tells us in one of his best-known sonnets that a friend of his had been travelling in Egypt, and the friend had told him how in the midst of the great desert he had come across a broken statue. It had been an immense one, but now nothing was left of it but the pedestal, and two legs, and part of the trunk. And carved on the pedestal were these words:

"My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings,
Look on my works, ye mighty, and
despair."

Who was he? An Egyptian who lived about two thousand years before Christ. We are not quite sure of the date, and we know practically nothing about him. But he was the Hitler of that period. And he put up this great statue of himself. "Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair." His works! —two legs and a bit of the trunk, and nothing else in all the sweeping desert. Tyrants are not immortal. "Their little systems have their day, they have their day, and cease to be." They strut; they shout; they say, "It will last a thousand years." But it won't. If it did "a thousand years in Thy sight, are like an evening gone." This is the real world where the Father holds sway, the Father with a spiritual purpose, Whose will, I say, can be thwarted awhile, but not ultimately defeated. Keep intimate with Him. And dare to believe that no soldier in the heat of battle, no surgeon in the operating theatre, none of our high commanders in the field, or at home, carry more responsibility than we do, whose special task it is to pray. Let us then be loyal in offering our intercessory prayers, and holding up before God the needs of our nation at this time.

IV.—God's Abiding Presence*

By the Bishop of Chelmsford (the Rt. Rev. H. A. WILSON, D.D.)

" Take heed, and be quiet: fear not, neither let thine heart be faint, because of these two tails of smoking firebrands " (Isaiah vii. 4).

I WANT to take as my subject this morning an incident in past history, in the history of God's people, and it is referred to in the earlier chapters of the Prophecy of Isaiah. It was a time of great national anxiety and fear. There was a confederation of two mighty nations against the people of God, and Isaiah, the great statesman-prophet, used the national emergency as an occasion to recall the people of God. I have no time to go into the details of the incident, probably it is familiar to many of you—how the people of the northern kingdom had united with the ferocious and brutal Syrians to destroy the people of the southern kingdom. And Isaiah, in the words of my text, gave his people this word of encouragement.

It surely has a very practical reference to our plight to-day. Isaiah does not exhaust his message by a simple and empty encouragement. No, he gives the people a basis for their hope and courage: and you will find that referred to in the next chapter, and it is a wonderful example, a wonderful illustration of God's abiding presence with His people. He warns the people in chap. viii, verse 6, not to forsake " the waters of Shiloah that go softly." What does he mean? The prophet is referring to the Pool of Siloam, which was the main water supply of the city of Jerusalem, and the water from that pool streamed by underground channels throughout the whole city of Jerusalem. It was their supreme hope. They could not hear it, for the waters of Shiloah " went softly." They could not see it, for it was underground. But it was there all the time. And that, says Isaiah, is the symbol of the presence of God with His people. That is the source of their strength. " Forsake not the waters of Shiloah which go softly." Rest your hopes, and find your strength by reliance upon the one who is always with you, whose presence cannot be seen, whose presence cannot be heard, but who is intimately near to His people at all times and under all conditions.

That thought of the presence of God with His people, familiar though it is to us all, is the supreme thing that we need to learn to-day. It is not to be found in just one chance passage of Holy Scripture. It is something which permeates the whole Bible. " In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." " Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." " It is not by the sword, or by the bow: but Thy power, and the mightiness of Thine arm that giveth me the victory." " The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge." " God is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble." Those are some out of many scores of passages which occur throughout the whole of Scripture, reminding us that the presence of God is our inspiration and our security.

But more than that. This, I always feel, is one of the great unifying links between the Old and the New Testaments. The Old Testament does not teach us a different religion from the New Testament. The Old Testament, the Jewish faith, is the root of the New Testament, the root of the Christian religion. There is a complete unity between the two. You see it here, because this thought of God's presence with His people is carried right over into the New Testament and is given a much more vivid; and much more personal, and much more intimate touch in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. He never thought, much less spoke of God as an absentee God. The whole of His teaching about God was concerning His nearness to His people, so much so that the people would look at one another as they listened to Him and say, " Never man spake as this Man." " Whence hath this Man this teaching? " He took the teaching of the Old Testament, giving it a new and clear turn, which in the full light of the noon-day sun of the Gospel, He alone could give to it.

When I decided to accept the invitation to come here, I knew that I should have nothing new to say. We do not want new things to-day: we do not want novelties. We want

* Address given at the Central Hall, Westminster, S.W., on Tuesday, December 2nd, 1941.

to learn, and to relearn better than ever before the old truths. And I know of nothing which in my own personal life I want to relearn more than this knowledge of God's intimate presence with us. I know of a man who made a discovery. He discovered this text in the Psalms. "My trust shall be in the tender mercy of God for ever." That man said, "That text has become a sheet-anchor in my life. It has given me a peace, and a confidence, and a courage that I never knew before." And is not that just what we all want?

Think of this, first of all, from the personal angle. We are all of us living in days when life is full of complications. A friend said to me the other day, "I do not know that we can teach children to-day to say the prayer,

'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child.
Pity my simplicity,
Suffer me to come to Thee.'

We need to say:

'Pity my *complexity*,
Suffer me to come to Thee.'"

Yes, life is full of complexities for us to-day. Life is very difficult. Life is very anxious. There are many of you whose hearts are clouded with fear lest something should happen to someone who is dear to you, far dearer than your own life. You may have boys in the North of Africa, or in some other undisclosed places, whose lives are at any moment in peril. Where can you find help and strength? Where can we all find help and strength in all those innumerable difficulties which are crowding upon us to-day? I know of nowhere, except by making that same discovery that the friend of whom I have spoken made. "My trust is in the tender mercy of God for ever." That has not only a personal application, but it is our message to the world to-day. It is our message to our own country. I have said many times throughout this war that there is a contribution which the Christian Church can make that nothing else can make, and it is a supreme and vital contribution: and that is to give to men that source of steadfastness, stability and strength which comes from reliance upon the intimate presence of God with us. And it is because of this that the Christian Church always strikes a triumphant note. There was no depression in the Christian Church in those first days. They were a little, inconspicuous and unimportant minority in the midst of the vast heathen world, and yet the note of triumph was always on their lips. St. John says, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." What was he talking about? The Christian Church victorious! Why, it hardly counted: it was just a mere handful of nonentities. Fancy them talking of victory over the world! Yes, but what is more, the apostle meant it. And what is more still, it was realised. What was at the back of St. John's mind? The thought of God on his side. God indwelling that inconspicuous and insignificant and despised minority, the little Christian Church. I have been looking at the poster which is about to be displayed. And it says exactly what I have been saying, and it says it in such a way that its message will strike home to the hearts of many people whom my voice can never reach (because they will not come to hear), this victory that overcometh the world is a victory based upon faith in God. When in the Upper Room in Jerusalem the Lord Jesus was leaving His bewildered and anxious disciples, St. Thomas said to Him, "How can we know the way? Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." There is a great message there for us to-day. In the Latin these words are: *Via—Veritas—Vita*. "V—V—V—," says Jesus to His disciples, "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." That is the victory, the following of Me. The way of victory is the way of obedience, the way of reliance, the way of simple, single-minded trust in the God who is always with His people, and who will never leave and never forsake them.

The British race is a Protestant race. Its virility is one expression of Protestantism, as are its Constitution, its Colonial polity, its ideals, its restraints and its sacrifices. Without the Protestant Reformation and without the principles of Luther and Calvin there could have been no British Empire.

—J. A. R. Cairns, in *The Sidelights of London*.

Continental Evangelical Life and Work

Portuguese Evangelical Alliance

We have received from Senor Moreira, President of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance, a most interesting report of the work of the Alliance during the year which ended on October 31st. We can only take extracts from the report, which is comprehensive and enlightening throughout. In it Senor Moreira says:—

"To deal with activities among Evangelicals it is well to hark back a bit. Some ten years ago, before the C.C.C. came into being, I endeavoured to bring about organisation among the Evangelical Christians of Portugal. To this intent search was made for common ground on which all groups doctrinally sound could unite, and ultimately, in 1925, the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance having been constituted, official recognition was obtained for it. To-day the Alliance has 176 full members and five honorary members.

"From organisation we passed on to co-operation, and the C.C.C. especially stands for this. Various committees use it as their place of meeting, and, directly or indirectly, it has contributed to better interdenominational understanding and, consequently, to more fruitful Christian effort. A register is kept of all persons in the country who render service in Christian work, and this has been found very useful. Funds entrusted to us by the European Christian Mission have been distributed in accordance with the wishes of the generous donors. We have issued various circulars, such as one explaining how Evangelical Christians should fill in census forms, and another explaining the right reserved to parents, under Clause 21 of the Concordat with the Roman See, to make a declaration of refusal to have their children taught religion and morals on R.C. lines, which otherwise is obligatory.

"The Portuguese Evangelical Alliance lodged a protest with the proper authorities against the imprisonment of two colporteurs in the employ of the B. and F.B.S., as also against the fact that a primer, the use of which is obligatory in all elementary schools, contains teaching contrary to evangelical principles, while, too, it presented for official approval the Articles of the *Assistencia e Beneficencia Evangelica*, a charitable institution. It also protested against the obstruction of a Protestant funeral and against attempted violation of the conscientious scruples of three school children.

"Under the corporative system the State has adopted, any congregation in order to obtain recognition of its rights and those of its legal representative must secure a certificate from the P.E.A., and this year a case in point has occurred.

"The Portuguese Evangelical Alliance had the privilege of delivering to H.E. the President of the Republic, gramophone records of sacred music sung by the Oporto Evangelical Choir, and of arranging for them to be broadcast by the *Emissora Nacional*.

"The situation having become truly critical as regards the publication of Christian literature in Portuguese (not only Portugal but also her colonies being affected, so missionary interests are involved), we have made various efforts to obtain help, and there seemed a likelihood, which has since been dispelled, that the American Tract Society would step into the breach. When, by degrees, we were receiving publications in Portuguese from the stocks in London of the United Society for Christian Literature, there came word of the destruction of their premises by enemy action! Mr. George Howes, who has been the principal publisher of tracts in Portugal, has decided to retire, and is about to proceed to England. He has handed over to us his stock of 170,000 tracts, together with his records covering the long period of his activities, etc."

Co-ordination in Portugal

The report from Senor Moreira continues:—"Following on *co-operation*, the second phase of our work, I wish to deal with *co-ordination* as the third, and this as regards both the mother country and the colonies. For the purpose we already have the Alliance, which, however, must be afforded further facilities. Once Portuguese pastors are installed in Luanda and Lourenço Marques, which is an urgent necessity, consideration should be given to the advisability of creating an Interdenominational Committee of Missionary Co-ordination, without which foreign missions will have to face very serious difficulties in the future. The mission boards would have to decide as to what powers should be conferred on it. This would seem to be the only means to offset the persistent and hitherto successful attacks by the R.C. prelates.

"Co-ordination would also involve the creation of a National Council of Religious Education, embracing S.S. activities and the fixing of a standard of qualification for Christian workers, as also other educational questions.

"Our links with national affairs remain to be considered. I have already mentioned a visit to H.E. the President of the Republic. When, at a public function, an attempt was made on the life of a R.C. bishop, and a grandson of the President was wounded when he tackled the assailant, I wrote, on behalf of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance, to Cardinal-Patriarch Cerejeira, as Head of the R.C. Church in Portugal, expressing our horror and sympathy, and from him I received a courteous reply."

We are grateful and thankful to Senor Morsin, to Mr. E. R. Holden, and others associated with the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance for their intensive work on behalf of the Protestant Churches of Portugal, and the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance in particular. The Alliance has long represented these Churches, and not only in Portugal, but Spain also. May the day soon dawn when in all other countries of Europe the Evangelical Alliance will be able to apply itself in its national organizations and with the help of the British Organization to Christian fellowship and co-operation in Truth and Love.

Refugees from Gibraltar The Alliance has taken interest in refugees since the earliest days of the present war, and as is well known, at all times shows itself the helper of all Christians under trial and persecution. A large number of refugees from Gibraltar have for some time been evacuated to this country, and many of them are accommodated near the Alliance House. The Council recently made a small grant to aid the work of helping them, a labour of love undertaken by Mr. Percy Buffard, Director of the Spanish Gospel Mission. Mr. Buffard reports as follows:—

"A large number of Gibraltarians have been evacuated to this country, the majority of whom are now housed in various hotels in London. Probably 50 per cent. of them do not understand English and are practically Spanish, except for their passport. Most of these refugees are Roman Catholic and their spiritual needs are cared for by Spanish-speaking Roman Catholic priests. Among them, however, are a few Protestants with whom I have been endeavouring to get into touch. Many difficulties were at first placed in my way, as no proselytizing work is allowed to be carried on among these people. However, I have at length obtained official permission to visit those Protestants who express a desire for a vist from a Protestant minister. So far I have found one or two Protestants in each hotel visited. Most of them are merely professing Christians, and one is doubtful if they are truly converted. I have been able to have conversation and prayer with them, also I have distributed tracts, Gospels and other literature in Spanish."

Latest News From Spain News from Spain is scanty, but in one way and another we have received postcards and letters, and at least are glad to hear from friends of whose whereabouts we have been uncertain. We have made arrangements with representatives in Mexico for the translating into Spanish of the letter of invitation and the topics for Prayer for the Universal Week of Prayer, 1942, and copies will be sent direct to Spain. Mr. Percy Buffard contributes some latest news from the Peninsula as follows:—

"All but two of the British men missionaries have been obliged to leave Spain. Some of these have been expelled by the Spanish Government, others have left because their very presence caused supicion to fall on the Spanish believers and endangered their personal safety. Three elderly women missionaries are staying on for the present. Remember these missionaries in prayer, and also the groups of believers who are now left to carry on by themselves.

"In the whole of N.W. Spain, where the Brethren were carrying on such a splendid work, there is now not a single missionary left, and only six of the places of worship are open for public meetings. In the rest of Spain there is still some measure of liberty, in Madrid, Seville and two or three smaller towns. Everywhere else the halls have been closed down.

"In most of the territory occupied by Franco during the civil war, there is less persecution of Protestants than elsewhere. Even where public meetings have been prohibited, private meetings are winked at. In most places occupied by the Republicans during the civil war, private as well as public meetings are strictly prohibited and there is much more persecution. This is doubtless because the believers are more suspect of favouring the Republicans.

A New Spanish Concordat Commenting upon the recent information of a new Concordat between the Franco Government and the Vatican, Mr. Stuart Brown, a representative of the Brethren missions in Spain, says:—

"A few months ago news reached us through the daily papers that the negotiations being carried on between the Franco Government and the Vatican for the signing of a Concordat were nearing completion, and that already a preliminary agreement had been signed in which the Spanish Government consented to the clauses in the Concordat of 1851, which declare Romanism to be 'the exclusive religion of the Spanish nation,' this after Franco's solemn pledge to grant full religious toleration. Thus the Roman Church has forced Spain to a retrogression of ninety years, and seized again those privileges and powers which have been such a fruitful cause of discontent in the past. Truly she is sowing more trouble for years to come. Nothing is more likely to cause a great increase of atheism and communism. This agreement gives us grave concern both as to the present and the future. But, thank God, there is another side. I was interested in reading a fascinating book called *Spanish Harvest*, by L. B. de Wirts and W. M. Pearce, to see how the authors close with a note of reasoned optimism: 'The feature which gives rise to the greatest optimism at the present juncture is that Spain is sown with

the indestructible seed of the Word.' Reference is then made to the thousands of Gospels, Testaments and portions of Scripture disseminated by the Bible Society, the Scripture Gift Mission and other agencies before the civil war. 'There are more copies of the Scripture in the homes of the people to-day than in any previous period of their history. The potentialities of such a situation are beyond calculation, for, be it remembered, that it was precisely this situation which wrought England's liberty in the sixteenth century. . . . Who can foretell the dimensions of the Spanish harvest that is yet to be?' So there are mighty forces at work in Spain for good and evil. Let us pray that the good may prove the stronger."

Was It Euthanasia? Our readers may recall that in a previous issue of this magazine we commented upon the wholesale murder in Germany of incurables, with which was associated the bombing of the well-known Bethel Hospital at Bielefeld, under the care of Pastor von Bodelschwingh. Now some further details are available, from which we quote:

"On September 18th, 1940, Bethel Hospital, a famous philanthropic institution for mentally deficient children, at Bielefeld, Germany, was damaged by bombs. The Nazis gave the bombing widespread publicity. Foreign correspondents were sent to see the damage and a long article appeared in the Nazi propaganda magazine, published in America, called 'Facts in Review' (October 2nd, 1941). This article rightly stressed the fact that the excellent work of the hospital and the reputation of its chief, Pastor von Bodelschwingh, were household words in international religious circles.

'On the Sunday after the bombing Pastor von Bodelschwingh preached a sermon in the hospital chapel, the text of which eventually reached this country. Its lofty tone made a great appeal to certain circles here, and it was published in certain journals, and in pamphlet form.

"Subsequent enquiry from official quarters in England revealed that while Bielefeld, in which there are many military objectives, had been bombed several times, there was no record of any attack on September 18th.

"This did not, in itself, seem to justify any statement on the rights or wrongs of the case, but the recent publication of *Berlin Diary*, by the American correspondent William L. Shirer, carries the controversy to a new phase.

"Shirer gives a great deal of useful information about the so-called 'mercy-killings' —executions of incurables in which the Nazis have been indulging since the war. It is known that about 100,000 have already been put to death. He writes as follows about Bethel Hospital:—

"'Late last summer [i.e., 1940] it seems, Pastor von Bodelschwingh was asked to deliver up certain of his worst cases to the authorities. Apparently he got wind of what was in store for them. He refused. The authorities insisted. Pastor von Bodelschwingh hurried to Berlin to protest. He got in touch with a famous Berlin surgeon, a personal friend of Hitler's. The surgeon, refusing to believe the story, rushed to the Chancellery. The Fuhrer said nothing could be done. The two men went to Franz Gürtner, Minister of Justice. Gürtner seemed more worried that the killings were being carried out without the benefit of a written law than that they were being carried out. However, he did agree to complain to Hitler about the matter.

"'Pastor von Bodelschwingh returned to Bethel. The local Gauleiter ordered him to turn over some of his inmates. Again he refused. Berlin then ordered his arrest. This time the Gauleiter protested. The pastor was the most popular man in his province. To arrest him in the middle of war would stir up a whole world of unnecessary trouble. He himself declined to arrest the man. Let the Gestapo take the responsibility; he wouldn't. This was just before the night of September 18th. The bombing of the Bethel asylum followed. Now I understand why a few people wondered as to *who* dropped the bombs.

"The sermon of the pastor referred to above was couched in language of Christian patience to which none could object. Time may yet prove, however, that he was wrong in assuming that the destruction was caused by a British attack."

Getting Rid of the Bible in Germany On November 29th *The Times* published a remarkable report from its Special Correspondent on the "German Frontier." We reproduce it in full:—

"A leaflet, the text of which is presumably identical with that of the document mentioned in Mr. Roosevelt's Navy Day speech, and which foreshadows the advent of a National Reich Church destined to supplant every other religious body throughout Germany, is now in circulation all over the Reich. The movement is not avowedly sponsored by either the State or the National-Socialist Party, but itself demands (and undoubtedly would at the appropriate moment receive) recognition by identification with the National-Socialist State, which the Reich Church would exist to serve.

"The essential features of this long manifesto are as follows:—

"'The aim of the National Reich Church is the redemption of all Germans and the acquisition, by delegation, of the sole right of absolute power over all Churches within the frontiers of the Reich. The Reich Church is to serve solely and exclusively the idea of *Volk und Rasse*, that is, first the nation in the sense of an ethnical unit, and secondly the Aryan race.

"' All other Churches and religious bodies, particularly those international in character or under international direction, will not be tolerated within Germany. Devotional services will take place in the evenings only, and regularly on Saturday nights will be accompanied by a solemn illumination. The Reich Church must be fused with the State, and be subject to the State as an obedient member. Immediate confiscation by the State of the property belonging to all Churches and confessions is emphatically demanded.

" ' The printing and sale of the Bible within Germany must cease immediately, and the importation of Bibles or other Christian literature must be ruthlessly prohibited. The greatest written document belonging to the German people is proclaimed to be Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, because ' this is not only the greatest but also the purest ethical guide for the present-day life of our people."

" .. President Roosevelt referred in his speech to an official German document in the possession of the United States Government, containing ' a plan to abolish all religions . . . the property of all Churches to be seized by the Reich. . . . The Cross and all other symbols of religion to be forbidden.' "

Evangelical Alliance in Hungary

We are now at war with Hungary. We regret this, not because it is unnecessary, but for the temporary separation it means from the very many in Hungary attached to the Hungarian Evangelical Alliance. We ask Prayer for our friends there, notably for the President of the Hungarian Alliance, Dr. Alex Csia, and others, representatives of the Protestant Churches, with whom we have had fellowship, and through whom we have obtained inspiration and hope of spiritual revival in Hungary. Some months ago we received a letter from Bishop Ravasz, President of the Assembly of the Reformed Church of Hungary, acknowledging the grant of £100 made by the Council to aid Polish refugees in Hungary. At the recent meeting of the National Synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary Bishop Ravasz spoke of the future in stirring words. He said:—

"There are 700 million Christians. The white race acknowledges the Name of Jesus Christ, at least outwardly. . . . But if we look more closely, we see that Christianity has lost its battle at the same time as it was winning it. The Christianisation of the world took place in an institutional way, and the institution slowly lost its power. For centuries civilisation has been loosening itself from the commandment of the Church, following its own laws, and penetrating the world with forces which continually drive the ship of the Church forwards or backwards. Human civilisation has become a ' lay civilisation ' which desires to make men happy by itself. Man has become unhappy and tormented. The Churches, too, regard one another as the greatest enemy, fight one another, and forget the common enemy who can destroy each one of these in the same way. And this struggle is repeated in each individual. Powerful forces act upon us, seek to estrange us from God. Our ideals wither and our prayers grow faint. With such an army, with such soldiers, Christianity has to face an age which will be more difficult than any before. Gold, human honours, the magic of false prophets, mysticism, the choir of shrieking dervishes, cannot help this world: the only thing that can help it is the Word that God speaks. That Word is the comfort, the force which has created the worlds and was made flesh in Christ. In vain does the traditional life of the Church go on if it does not transform the individual and if it does not bear this witness: Jesus Christ stretches out His hand to me, even in the valley of the shadow of death. Christ is the leader, the weapon. To have Him is to be victorious."

The Evangelical Alliance in Hungary is striving, with good success, to impress what Bishop Ravasz emphasised—in vain does the traditional life of the Church go on if it does not transform the individual, and if it does not bear witness to the Word that God speaks in Jesus Christ. Our readers may remember the notable visit to Hungary a few years ago by Rev. E. L. Langston, Canon St. John Thorpe, and the General Secretary of the World's Evangelical Alliance, when notable united gatherings were addressed in the great State Concert Hall at Buda Peath. The restrictions of war cannot separate from the love of God in Christ Jesus those united to Him in Truth and Love.

Religious Revival in Holland

It is cheering to learn (from the *Presbyterian Register*) that a marked religious revival, particularly noticeable among labouring classes which have heretofore been considered more or less apathetic toward the Church, is becoming apparent throughout Holland. The shift in sentiment, beginning about a year ago, is attributed to the fact that the Church has been one of the few institutions, if not the only one, to remain firm in a time of crisis.

Spontaneous demonstrations on the part of labouring groups in openly condemning anti-Semitism as un-Christian, were pointed to as examples of the change in attitude. In several instances, it was stated, strikes have been staged in protest against anti-Jewish tactics.

Within the Church itself—both Protestant and Catholic—a quickened awareness of religious values is admittedly taking place. The circulation among Dutch Church people of theological journals and religious books has been steadily increasing. But the tension between the Nazis and the sturdy Dutch, who

refuse to accept their ideology, is also increasing. The crudest methods of propaganda are used by the Nazis, as for instance, is shown by the statement of a Nazi speaker at an Amsterdam meeting: "People of Holland, repent, for the Great Germanic Reich is at hand." The leader of the Nazi agricultural front exclaimed before a gathering of farmers (most of whom were Calvinists): "Herr Reichskommissar, forgive us our sins and give us our daily bread."

All the old political parties have been forbidden and two hundred of their leaders imprisoned. The pressure in cultural and religious matters is very strong, but in spite of the propaganda matter compulsorily carried in the newspapers, the public is well informed, since nearly everybody listens to the British radio. Ten pastors were recently imprisoned, one being Pastor Buskes, who published a courageous confession of faith including these words: "I do not believe in a God who is with the strongest battalions and who gives the world to the violent, but in a God who promises the earth to the meek who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness."

A leading Dutch statesman, also a leading Churchman, said before an audience of 5,000 people: "Spiritual freedom has entered into our blood . . . freedom of conscience, freedom for the Church, for the school, for preaching, freedom to carry spiritual values into public life. . . . We cannot eliminate from public life what is most sacred to us." He was answering those voices that were crying for some sort of compromising national unity that would get peace by dropping every kind of stubborn principle.

Norwegian Church Unity A correspondent in Switzerland sends us an extract from the *Neue Zurcher Zeitung* reporting that for the first time in Norway's Church history a joint Pastoral Letter was issued by representatives of all different Church organisations to summon for prayer both members of the State Church and of the Free Churches. Bishop Berggrav, Prof. Hallesby and the Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, Pastor Ohren, who signed the Pastoral Letter, started working together a few weeks ago with a view to a closer fellowship among the different Churches. The first visible sign as a result was a call to Prayer last Sunday at nine o'clock of all Norwegian Christians. The Prayer in the Pastoral Letter was read in all Norwegian churches and religious meeting places, and where it was impossible it was to have been read in the home.

Perhaps it is in Norway that the finest story of Church resistance to Nazi aggression is to be found. In Holland it was anti-Semitism that roused the Churches; in Norway it was the breakdown of common justice and the attack on the freedom of the ministry.

In the course of a recent letter the Norwegian bishops said: "Can the Church watch quietly while the institutions of God are being neglected and order and right dissolved? . . . The Christian community is a living spiritual body, established by Jesus Christ and having in Him its Saviour and Lord. The Church must fulfil her task fearlessly, because the will and the word of God are above everything else in this earth."

Persecution of Protestants in Czechoslovakia The World's Evangelical Alliance follows with deep interest the progress in this country of Christian Fellowship movements directed to refugees from occupied countries of Europe. A strong branch of this work is the Czechoslovak Christian Fellowship, the leader of which is Pastor F. M. Hnik. Speaking of prevailing religious conditions in Czechoslovakia the *Presbyterian Register* says:—

Protestant Churches in the Protectorate are treated by the German régime as brutally as is the Catholic Church. The Nazis suspect that the Protestant, as well as the Catholic, faith is one of the moral forces which enable the Czechoslovak nation to resist German oppression. But, in addition, Protestant Churches are hated by the oppressors because they remind the Czechoslovak people of a great epoch in their history, of their glorious and victorious battles with the Germans in the Husite time, the time of the first great religious reform in Europe.

In theory German National Socialism has no objection to any Church; but in actual fact it paralyses the action of all Churches, in that it suppresses their liberties. The veto to preach freely applies to the pastors of the Protestant as well as to those of the Czechoslovak Church. It is forbidden to apply the words of the Gospel to the life of to-day; it is forbidden to use quotations which conflict with the dogmas of Hitlerism. The pastor who is caught speaking on, or showing an interest in, matters other than eternal, must forthwith submit all his speeches to the German censor, and is only allowed to preach to his faithful such sermons as have been approved! If he departs from this course he can be sure to find himself under lock and key the very same day; for the agents of the Gestapo supervise even the religious services of the Protestants.

Soviet Russia and Religious Freedom Whether past or present, perhaps no religious organisation has done more for religious liberty in Russia than the Evangelical Alliance. When, under the persecuting hands of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church the Believers (Stundists) of Russia were banished to Siberia, or otherwise brutally treated, the Alliance pleaded their cause before the Emperor, and in other ways sought their

relief. Later Dr. Baedeker became a representative of the Alliance in the distribution of the Word of God in Russia, and still later Mr. Adam Podin took up the mantle of Dr. Baedeker, and for many years, supported by the Alliance, visited the Russian prisons, and was under God the means of the conversion of many hardened criminals, some of them condemned to death.

When the revolution broke out in Russia, religious liberty was proclaimed (an autograph letter establishing the fact from Prince Lvoff, then Prime Minister, is in our possession.) But the period of freedom of conscience was short-lived. The rise to power in Russia of the Soviets crushed all hope of religious liberty; for many years even the Bible has been a forbidden book in Russia. How the old order appears to be changing. Challenged on the question of Religious Liberty in Russia, the Soviet Ambassador in London, M. Maisky, has replied that:

"The Soviet Union recognises that the internal order in each State is its own concern. The Soviet Union also considers that religion is a private matter for each citizen. . . . In spite of what is thought by so many, religion is not persecuted, and every citizen has the right to believe or not to believe, according to his or her own conscience. Article 124 of the Stalin Constitution reads: 'In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the Church in the U.S.S.R. is separated from the State, and the school from the Church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.' This article is quite clear, and it is by no means a dead letter. Indeed in 1940 there were in the Soviet Union over 30,000 independent religious communities of every kind, over 8,000 churches, and about 60,000 priests and ministers of religion. Believers practise their religious freely, they frequent services, they marry in church, christen their children, have religious funerals, celebrate religious festivals, elect leaders of their congregations."

Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke promptly underlines this in a letter to *The Times* with the pertinent question "Why is freedom of propaganda restricted to *anti-religious?*"—and adds that as concerns the religious communities no Sunday Schools, no Bible Study Groups, no lectures, no social gatherings and no libraries are allowed.

The Soviet answer to this is seemingly the impossible one given by Mr. Maisky: "The Soviet Union considers that religion is a private matter for each citizen"—an impossible answer because it is a limitation religion can never accept, religion being in itself, of essence, social. One must hope that present happenings will produce a more rational concept in Soviet Russia of the basic nature of religion, and of the value of toleration! as it is producing a better appreciation in Great Britain of the social values of Russian Communism.

Common Prayer

"Ye also, helping together by Prayer."
"Unto Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all we ask or think."

LET US GIVE THANKS—

FOR the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and for the victorious Faith on which the one Church of Jesus Christ stands.

For deliverances experienced during the year 1941 personal and national—let us thank God also for what, we may believe, He is going to do. *Surrum corda.*

LET US PRAY—

LET us remember to pray that the forthcoming Universal Week of Prayer may, under God, bring world-wide blessing; above all, the spiritual revival for which so many hope and pray.

That 1942, if it please God, may be the year of Victory, and that out of the present world catastrophe Peace and Goodwill among men may prevail everywhere. That liberty of conscience and freedom of worship may prevail everywhere.

"Thy Kingdom come, O God; Thy reign, O Christ, begin."

For all associated in the work and witness of the World's Evangelical Alliance, and that 1942 may be a year of extension, and financial prosperity.

Reunion Notes

"In things essential, unity; in things non-essential, liberty; in all things, charity."

Christian Union in 1942

It is impossible to write upon the subject of Christian Union to-day without expressing misgivings. Every instructed Christian must be concerned for the true unity of the one Church, which is the "Body of Christ." This, of course, is the foundation reason for the Evangelical Alliance, increasingly active as it approaches its centenary in all œcumenical circles, striving throughout to maintain and further the "unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace." But the more the whole subject is considered, interpreted by the word "Unity," it is differently regarded by different schools of thought and different speakers. Some are convinced of the necessity of episcopacy, others favour federal union, while still others visualise something like an Imperial Church on a world commission basis which would operate through every part of the globe and create an external unity which might easily develop into dictatorship. The question at issue here is "Does God really desire an external unity which will with its ministry and œcumenical assemblies, on international lines endeavour to prove to the world we are 'one in Christ'"? Many, very many, will answer the question in the negative, and raise another: "Is not the plan and purpose of God in Christ the manifestation of that inner unity of the Spirit which expresses itself in fellowship in Prayer, preaching, and the observance of the two Sacraments, regardless of the form of ministry so long as it is the response of the individual to the call of God, without distinction of names or nations, but with emphasis upon Truth and Love? When Christians on their knees and with a passionate desire to do the will of God thus unite God will surely fulfil His promises in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on their fellowship. Human organisation, however applied, can be no substitute for the unity of command under the Captain of our Salvation, Jesus Christ, and what is required as we enter a new year is to bring all to recognise this fact. When this is the primary task of the Churches there will be unity that the world will recognise, and the Churches will go from triumph to triumph.

Spurious Unity

We have spoken later on in these "notes" of what is known as "Anglo-Catholicism," and of Episcopal strictures upon the "Sword of the Spirit Movement," concerning which we note that a recent issue of the *Guardian* included references to this movement as an important step "taken by the leaders of the several sections of the Christian Church to restore some measure of Christian unity." The Bishop of Chichester is likely to become regarded as more ridiculous than sublime in his lordship's attachments and references to this Movement, which has already been repudiated by some of his fellow Bishops as by the Federal Council of the Free Churches. In a sermon in Great St. Mary's Church on Sunday, October 26th, the Bishop of Chichester (we quote from a Press report) "spoke of the misgivings about the consequences of collaboration which troubled some members of every Church. It was easy for him to dispose of some of these. Many, for instance, suppose that the Roman Catholic Church is hostile to religious liberty. Yet in the Constitution of the Irish Free State—a Catholic document of recent creation—freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice of religion is guaranteed to every citizen. It is not, in fact, consonant with the teaching of the Church that anyone should embrace the Catholic faith involuntarily. Further, there is no question of inter-communion, or of mutual discussion of matters of doctrine and Orders. These belong to a different universe of discourse.

"The Bishop spoke of the ways of making this new joint movement a real force in society. Above all else, he stressed the need of a recovery of faith. 'Let us begin again,' he said. 'I see in this movement for the collaboration of Christians for the restoration of spiritual order a new means through which the Spirit can act on the world.'"

The Bishop of Chichester is prominent in movements for Christian Fellowship extending to refugees from occupied countries of Europe (movements, we may comment, from the counsels of which the World's Evangelical Alliance has been inconveniently excluded), and it is important to let it be clearly understood that probably the vast majority of Christian people of non-Roman attachment in this country and elsewhere would repudiate the Bishop's feelings and utterances. To quote religious liberty in Eire as indicative of tolerance in the Roman Church for the Protestant doctrine and example of Religious Freedom is too bad. Surely the Bishop of Chichester can inform himself on what is common knowledge concerning the persecution of Protestants in all Roman Catholic countries and influences.

Religious Freedom and World Peace The principles of Religious Liberty are vitally associated with those liberties for which the democracies are fighting to-day. President Roosevelt has made this clear, and the Prime Minister of this country may be relied upon to maintain this essential element of future Peace. Dr. J. H. Rushbrooke, whose interests and ardent striving in the matter extend beyond the World Alliance of Baptist Churches (of which he is President) has recently stated that "There was no clear recognition of religious freedom in the five Peace Points of the Pope. Indeed, one phrase would appear to be deliberately chosen in order to exclude the idea. The Pope speaks of the claims of minorities, but the word 'minorities' is qualified by the adjective 'racial.' In discussion of minority claims and rights during recent years, it has been customary to speak of racial, religious and cultural minorities. The dropping of two of these adjectives is not accidental.

"Nor is it accidental that in radio declarations by the Pope such characteristic expressions as freedom for the 'due' worship of God, and freedom for the 'true' worship of God, are used. The doctrine of religious liberty as understood, for example, in Great Britain and America, is that which in this country was first clearly stated by the Baptist Thomas Helwys in the reign of James I: 'Men's religion to God is betwixt God and themselves.' He stood for freedom of conscience, not only for those with whom he was in agreement, but for men and women everywhere. Those who claim freedom for themselves and their fellow-believers only, do not believe in freedom at all."

Speaking at the same time of the official attitude of the Roman Catholic Church to Religious Freedom, Dr. Rushbrooke referred to the "Sword of the Spirit Movement," and said: "It is a really serious position it creates. Apparently it aims first at gaining kudos for the Pope and secondly at side-tracking the issue of religious freedom," and he added: "This question of Religious Freedom arises not only in Europe. In Japan and Japanese-controlled countries there is a resolute attempt to compel the acceptance of Shinto religious rights even in Christian schools. A situation has developed not unlike that which the early Christians had to face when they rejected emperor worship."

The fundamental demand on all non-Roman Churches and Christians in this country should be the acceptance by all of the principle of absolute Religious Freedom as the basic condition for the establishment not only of a righteous Peace but of that quality of religious faith which respects conscience and is the birthright of every Christian man and woman.

Anti-Semitism In a remarkable article which appears in an American contemporary *Christianity and Crisis*, M. Jacques Maritain discusses the dangerous weapon of Anti-Semitism which is a deliberate part of Hitler's Propaganda technique to promote, not only in Germany but wherever he can, hatred and persecution of the Jews. Quoting this article in a recent issue, the Editor of *Time and Tide* remarks: "The degree of anti-Semitism in any country is the measure of the decay of its civilisation, and of the extent of its abandonment to the forces of barbarism. Here, in this country, it is noticeable that anti-Semitism is a test. People who are strongly anti-Jewish are those most inclined to be pro-Fascist, if not pro-Nazi in their views." Speaking of Christianity and anti-Semitism M. Maritain (who is a Roman Catholic philosopher of liberal and independent views) says: "It is for Christianity that I fear. Perhaps the danger is greater in countries which have not as yet experienced Nazi terrorism. . . . It is impossible to compromise with anti-Semitism; it carries in itself, as in a living germ, all the spiritual evil of Nazism. Anti-Semitism is the moral fifth column in the Christian conscience."

Christ and Modern Judaism In the course of his remarkable article reviewed M. Maritain says: "The growing solicitude in Israel's heart for the Just Man crucified through the error of the high priests, is a symptom of unquestionable importance. To-day in America representative Jewish writers, like Sholem Asch and Waldo Frank, are trying to reintegrate the Gospel into the brotherhood of Israel. While not yet recognising Jesus as the Messiah, they do recognise him as the most pure Jewish figure in human history. They themselves would be disturbed to be considered as leaning towards Christianity. Yet while remaining closer than ever to Judaism, they believe that the Gospel transcends the Old Testament and consider it a divine flower issuing from the stem of the Patriarchs and the Prophets. Never forgetful of the conflicts of history and of the harsh treatment received by their people, the authors of *Salvation* and of *The New Discovery of America* have long known and loved mediæval Christianity and Catholic spiritual life. They agree with Maurice Samuel that "Christophobia" is the spiritual essence of the demoniacal racism of our pagan world. Many other signs give evidence that Israel is beginning to open its eyes, whereas the eyes of many self-styled Christians are blinded, darkened by the exhalations of the old pagan blood suddenly, ferociously welling up once more among Gentiles.

"'Jesus Christ is in agony until the end of the world,' said Pascal. Christ suffers in every

innocent man who is persecuted. His agony is heard in the cries of so many human beings humiliated and tortured, in the suffering of all those images and likenesses of God treated worse than beasts. He has taken all these things upon Himself, He has suffered every wound. 'Fear not, my child, I have already travelled that road. On each step of the abominable way I have left for you a drop of my blood and print of my mercy.'

"But in the mystical body of the Church the surplus humanity which Christ finds in each of the members of this His body, is called upon, in so far as each is a part of the whole, to participate in the work of this body, which is the redemption continued throughout time. Through and in the passion of His mystical body, Christ continues actively to perform the task for which He came. He acts as the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind."

The Fellowship of Suffering

M. Maritain continues:—"Israel's passion is not a co-redemptive passion, achieving for the eternal salvation of souls what is lacking (as concerns application, not merits) in the Saviour's sufferings. It is suffered for the goading on of the world's temporal life. In itself, it is the passion of being caught up in the temporal destiny of the world, which both irritates the world and seeks to emancipate it, and on which the world venges itself for the pangs of its history. This does not mean that Christ is absent from the passion of Israel. Could He forget His people, who are still loved because of their fathers and to whom have been made promises without repentance? Jesus Christ suffers in the passion of Israel. In striking Israel, the anti-Semites strike Him, insult Him and spit on Him. To persecute the house of Israel is to persecute Christ, not in His mystical body as when the Church is persecuted, but in His fleshly lineage and in His forgetful people whom He ceaselessly loves and calls. In the passion of Israel, Christ suffers and acts as the shepherd of Zion and the Messiah of Israel, in order gradually to conform His people to Him. If there are any in the world to-day—but where are they?—who give heed to the meaning of the great racist persecutions and who try to understand this meaning, they will see Israel as drawn along the road to Calvary, by reason of that very vocation which I have indicated, and because the slave merchants will not pardon Israel for the demands it and its Christ have implanted in the heart of the world's temporal life, demands which will ever cry 'no' to the tyranny of force. Despite itself Israel is climbing Calvary, side by side with Christians—whose vocation concerns the kingdom of God more than the temporal history of the world; and these strange companions are at times surprised to find each other mounting the same path. As in Marc Chagall's beautiful painting, the poor Jews, without understanding it, are swept along in the great tempest of the Crucifixion, around Christ who is stretched—

Across the lost world . . .
At the four corners of the horizon
Fire and Flames
Poor Jews from everywhere are walking
No one claims them
They have no place on the earth
To rest—not a stone
The wandering Jews. . . .*

"The central fact, which has its deepest meaning for the philosophy of history and for human destiny—and which no one seems to take into account—is that *the passion of Israel to-day is taking on more and more distinctly the form of the Cross.*

"Christ crucified extends His arms toward both Jews and Gentiles; He died, St. Paul says, in order to reconcile the two peoples, and to break down the dividing barrier of enmity between them. 'For He is our peace, He that hath made both one, and hath broken down the dividing barrier of enmity. He hath brought to naught in His flesh the law of commandments framed in decrees, that in Himself He might create of the two one new man, and make peace and reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, slaying by means thereof their enmity.'†

"If the Jewish people did not hear the call made to them by the dying Christ, yet do they remain ever summoned. If the Gentiles indeed heard the call, now racist paganism casts them away from it and from Him who is our peace. Anti-Semitic hatred is a directly anti-Christic frenzy to make vain the blood of Jesus and to make void His death. Agony now is the way of achieving that reconciliation, that breaking down of the barrier of enmity—which the madness of men prevented love from accomplishing, and the frustration of which is the most refined torment in the sufferings of the Messiah—a universal agony in the likeness of that of the Saviour, both the agony of the racked, abandoned Jews and of the racked, abandoned Christians who live by faith. More than ever, the mystical body of Christ needs the people of God. In the darkness of the present day, that moment seems invisibly to be in preparation, however remote it still may be, when their reintegration as St. Thomas puts it, will 'call back to life the Gentiles, that is to say the lukewarm faithful, when "on account of the progress of iniquity, the charity of a great number shall have waxed cold." (Math. xxiv. 12.)'"

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* Raissa Maritain, *Chapell* (Lettre de Nuit).

† St. Paul, Ephes. ii, 14-16.

General Smuts on a Holy War

Addressing the South African United Party Congress at Bloemfontein recently, General Smuts, Prime Minister of South Africa, said: "I look upon this war as one of the great religious wars of the world."

This was not an ordinary war, he said. It was once more the historic fight which was fought out from age to age—the fight between light and darkness.

It involved all the things mankind had struggled for through centuries—freedom of conscience and religion; freedom to shape one's own life and destiny; freedom to be the custodian of one's own soul.

It was a question whether those ideals should survive or whether the world should listen to a dictator, to a man who might be the devil himself.

"I believe that man is the devil himself, that anti-Christ is loose in the world to-day," General Smuts continued. "Before I did not believe there was such a thing as anti-Christ, but I believe it to-day. I see what incarnate evil means in the world."

The Prime Minister warned South Africans against making themselves snug. "Let us say good-bye to comfort," he said. "The spirit of dedication and consecration is called for.

"I want us to be worthy of the young men and women who are fighting for us.

"Our boys have gone north—there are 100,000 of them on active service. Large numbers of them are in the most dangerous battlefields in the world.

"We are fighting to-day for things compared with which the betterment of our earthly lot means nothing at all."

America Enters the War

The entry of America into the war is even more marvellous than the resurrection of Russia. The Americans are a peace-loving nation. The ideas of pacifism have always found their most fertile soil in that of the United States. Peace Societies, which in Europe count their membership by the score, run into thousands in America. The political history and predilections of many Americans were against their intervening in an European dispute. The financial and economic interests of many of their people were bound up in avoiding war rather than engaging in it. From the point of view of many in the United States, largely known as "isolationists," nothing could justify the American Government in involving their nation in the horrors of this struggle. Many persons on this side have complained that President Roosevelt did not move earlier. In that they misjudged him. But in any case, the fact that, notwithstanding a long series of insults and injuries inflicted upon Americans by Germany, he maintained his pacific attitude and resolutely declined to allow his nation to take up arms merely in order to resent specific wrong done to it, places the action of America on a wonderfully lofty plane. America comes in, not to fight for herself, but to fight for the world. She enters the fray not for the love of war, but for the sake of peace. Her assistance, therefore, is not only of material value to the Allies, but of the highest spiritual value. The President has heralded the entry of America into the lists with a declaration that German methods and German aspirations and brutalities are a menace to Christian humanity and brotherly relationships amongst mankind. The statecraft of German absolutism, the tyranny of German militarism, the horrors of German materialism are inconsistent with all law, human or divine. If man is to accept Christ as Teacher—if he is to love God with all his soul, and to love his neighbour as himself—he must hold different ideals of human government than those which German Nazism has set up. Here once more we may see the hand of God moving the heart of the American people and rousing that mighty nation to throw its weight on the side of those who are spending their treasure and their lives to secure for the world a new era of permanent peace and goodwill, coupled to freedom and reality for all alike.

But whilst we may feel joy at the thought that God is leading other nations to help us in our fight, let us be careful to avoid expressions of self-complacency or self-adulation on this ground. We are, indeed, fighting to attain a better world. It is this thought that has encouraged the hearts of our forces at home and overseas, and has brightened the eyes of many a hero dying at the assault. But do not let us think that this is all due to our own action. If we do so, we are no better than the Germans, whose national egotism has been their national undoing. We are, at the best, only one of many tools with which Providence is working out its own decrees. And we are indeed a faulty tool. No one can say that our national life has been a pattern of what a Christian nation's should be. Our sins have been patent, and our indifference to them appalling. We have stood by and allowed drunkenness, immorality, avarice and deceit to get firmer and firmer hold upon our people. We must realise our own shortcomings before we can expect that God will give us the victory and peace for which we pray and strive.

The Christian Faith and Restatement

From many sides we hear a summons for the restatement of Christian Faith. It comes from men who are uncertain of their own position within organised Christianity and wish to have a Church in accordance with their own ideals of what it ought to be. To them such a Church must be non-miraculous in belief. It must accept the miraculous element in Holy Scripture as the poetry of an uncritical age that has no relation to fact. It must

abandon belief in the Deity of our Lord as a Divinity different in kind from that we share as men—from which it only differs in degree. It must look upon Prayer as having only to do with emotional states, and consider improper any conviction that God can answer Prayer involving His intervention in the events of ordinary life. In other words, we are asked to remodel the Faith we have learned from Holy Scripture by abandoning the essentials taught by our Lord and His Apostles, considering His life as narrated in the Gospels to be unhistorical and His Church to be founded on an event—His resurrection—that never took place. Idealism is attractive. The spirit of adventure in search of truth is inevitable, but the Christian adventurer starts with a goal in view—the Cross; and from the Cross he proceeds on the path that leads him to follow under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the Person of the Living Christ, who will mould character until it becomes more and more like His own. We see no reason to believe that the progress of Science has made our basis of belief weaker. On the contrary, as the years pass, Science is learning lessons that make scientists recognise there is more to be discovered than has yet been tracked, and God is not driven out of nature by scientific progress the historical Christ is not destroyed by the growth of criticism. The Bible has its authority undiminished by the attacks of men who too often prepare for the assault by disbelieving in the supernatural. We need restatement in the sense of re-affirmation of fundamentals that are found in the pages of Holy Scripture, and have proved the stay and sustenance of the Church of Christ throughout all ages. A return to Christ is our greatest need—a return to Him as He was known by the Apostles and St. Paul. Speculation can interest the imagination; only personal contact with the Living Christ can save the soul and give new life. To these verities the World's Evangelical Alliance is ever giving witness, and seeks to unite all who share its belief in Truth and Love.

Why We Are Evangelicals Words are more important than many believe them to be. Historically it is possible for a word to have one meaning in one century and a different signification in a later age. The "indifferent" administration of justice meant the impartial administration in the seventeenth century. Now it implies the careless administration of the courts. "Evangelical" is now claimed to be a mark of a school of thought that lays stress upon ministerial order and Church rites as necessary to full membership of the Church of Christ. It places in the very foreground ceremonialism and organisation, and its emphasis is on what is conferred to men by the due administration of the Sacrament. An Evangelical does not disparage order or discredit the Sacraments of the Gospel. On the contrary, his attachment to Gospel teaching makes him most anxious to have everything done decently and in order and to have the Sacrament administered as our Lord ordained. He, however, places in the forefront of his message the fact that God is a Spirit, and that worship, to be acceptable to Him, must be in the Spirit and in Truth. He holds that the Gospel message is Salvation through faith in the living and crucified Saviour who died to save sinners. The emphasis is placed on the Cross—the death of Christ. The New Testament is centred in the Cross. The Gospels led up to the Cross, and the Apostles made the Cross the main theme of their preaching. An Evangelical is one who faithfully follows the teaching of the Gospel of Salvation and makes living union with a living Christ the core of Christianity, and maintains that this can only be maintained by personal repentance and personal faith.

Bishop Chavasse on Conversion The Bishop of Rochester (Dr. C. M. Chavasse), speaking on "Evangelism in War time," at his diocesan conference, urged the birth of a new evangelistic movement in the diocese. "After a century and a half of modern missions," said the Bishop, "the Church in pagan lands has discovered what we, with our traditional Christianity, are only learning in the searchlight of war, namely, that each fresh generation requires to be evangelised; that, priceless as is the value of a godly home, even the children of Christian parents must be converted." Dr. Chavasse recalled the words of Mr. A. R. Vidler: "In a country like England, Christian for many centuries, at least in name, it came to be supposed that every normal person was brought up a Christian, and therefore became a Christian as a matter of course, and so did not need to be converted to Christianity. Under these circumstances the word 'conversion' came to be reserved for a comparatively small number of supposedly eccentric people who made a dramatic change of faith, or for notorious evil livers such as burglars who joined the Salvation Army. It is mere sophistry and a refusal to face facts," Dr. Chavasse declared, "to pretend that the baptised do not require conversion; though possibly they might be better for a 'recall' or a 'renewal.' We have played round the subject far too long; but now a shipwrecked civilisation sends out its S O S (Save Our Souls)."

Anglo-Catholic Teaching One of the reasons to fear and fight the Anglo-Catholic movement is because it is not an honest movement. It was built up on a system of deceit. It is dreadful that to-day, men who

have taken Ordination vows, the very essence of which is a protest against Romanism, should remain in the Church in order to unprotestantise her.

The *Weston-super-Mare Mercury* recently contained the following report of "Questions Night" at the Church of All Saints:—

It was "Questions Night" at All Saints' Church on Sunday. The Vicar (the Rev. Maxwell Fisher) answered three queries which had been put to him, instead of preaching the usual sermon. There was a large and interested congregation.

The first question was, "What is the difference between Anglo-Catholic and Roman Catholic?" Answering it, the Vicar said, before thinking of differences, people should be perfectly clear that essentially we were the same Church; there was only one Church, whose fundamentals were ministry, bishops, priests, deacons, creed and the sacraments. The difference was not of Faith, but of Order; or, in other words, administration, which did not break the Unity. "We readily acknowledge," said Mr. Fisher, "that the Pope is the Chief Bishop in the West, but we claim the right to administer our own affairs, and to say that we understand the mind of our own people."

Discussing, "Why does the Church of England now adopt the Roman use of ritual and ceremonial; was not the Sarum Use the original, as used at Salisbury and elsewhere?" Mr. Fisher said the Roman Mass was the parent of the English rite. It was better to get away from controversy and use the parent rite in English, because surely it was in worship, and especially in Mass, that we should forward the day when the Church of England and Church of Rome, now in unity, might become one body—in union.

The third query, "Why should there be various forms in the services of the Church of England, e.g., the Mass at one church differs from that of another?" was answered by the Vicar with the point that the Mass in the Prayer Book was the minimum, and wherever one went the structure was not altered. The Church of England catered for all sorts and sizes of temperament; and these differences did not matter much if Mass was the central service in every church every Sunday.

The question at stake is nothing less than New Testament Christianity. If the efforts of Anglo-Catholic Romanists succeed—of whatever sort they are—and it is better to have to do with real Roman Catholics than with these hybrid individuals who do the work of Rome under the name of Anglo-Catholics—at least Roman Catholics as such are honest; but if they succeed in what they are trying to do, then New Testament Christianity will cease to be, and in its place we shall have a discredited and disproved mediævalism.

What is the cure? How can the microbe of Romanism be destroyed? There are many things we can advocate that would help very much in this work. But the real cure lies in a revival of true spiritual life. It is because our Evangelical churches have been so cold, so half hearted, so materially minded, that the danger against which we protest has become possible. If our churches were fully alive, if our hearts burned with the living fires of God, there would be no movement such as we are fighting against to-day. If a great revival of true religion swept over the country, priestcraft would die like flies in winter. There was no ritualism at Pentecost. Every true revival since the days of Christ has meant a return, not to formalism and to outward observances, but to the simple Gospel; to sincere repentance and to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bishop of Rochester on the "Sword of the Spirit" Movement

The Bishop of Rochester (Dr. Chavasse), writing in his Diocesan Chronicle, thus refers to Rome's much-vaunted but misnamed "Sword of the Spirit" movement: "When the Roman Catholic 'Sword of the Spirit' movement was inaugurated a year ago many believed that it afforded an opportunity of practical Christian co-operation with the Roman Church towards a new order in society. It now transpires that adherents of other Churches can only become associate members of the moment, and are denied any real say in its aims and progress.

"Even with all the passionate urge and desire abroad for fellowship and co-operation between the Churches it is hard to see how, at present, any united front with the Church of Rome can be anything but unreal or prove more than a sentimental gesture doomed to disappointment. Without heat or condemnation it is wisest to face facts, and so to understand that where the Church of Rome is concerned we can only agree to differ."

Dr. Chavasse goes on to say that no clear Roman Catholic policy exists with regard to Nazi and Fascist aggression. Last month the Pope refused President Roosevelt's sequest, "that he should declare the war against Nazism to be a just war," but his answer was "a firm refusal to take sides." And yet Cardinal Hinsley, to judge by his splendid utterances, is convinced that we are indulging in a war of the Cross against the Swastika.

The Bishop says picture postcards in Rome represented the invasion of Abyssinia as the entrance of Christianity to a heathen land. They portrayed the Virgin and the Child riding on a tank into Abyssinia escorted by Italian soldiers and airplanes.

The Pope blessed the rape of Abyssinia; an action explained by the highest Roman Catholic authority in England as the only possible course for a poor old man guarding the treasures of the Vatican.

Certain pronouncements and political action were also indicative of Roman Catholic policy that must cause grave misgiving. The Five Peace Points of the Pope did not include the right of freedom of conscience—instead, a recent concordat between Franco and the Vatican had established the Roman Catholic Church as exclusively the only Christian Church in Spain, a proceeding which meant the persecution of the Evangelical Churches in the country. Again, souvenir programmes sold at the great meetings at the Stoll, in connection with the movement, accepted the standard of teaching of the Papal Encyclicals, affirming that "light enough to guide our feet is given to us outwardly in the principles so authoritatively proclaimed by the Holy See."

The Encyclical of Leo XIII declares briefly: (1) There are two powers on earth, the civil and the ecclesiastical, the latter being the Roman Catholic Church. (2) Civil laws, if opposed to the Church, are not morally binding. (3) The principles of freedom of conscience, publication and speech are condemned. (4) That the State ought to establish that Roman Catholic religion as true alone. (5) That the Roman Church has the right to teach, to judge and to punish.

"Do the members of the other Churches in England and America," asks the Bishop, "really desire the authoritaive words of Leo XIII to be the light to guide our feet towards a New Christian Order, or to co-operate with Rome in establishing the order envisaged by the Papal Encyclicals?"

Dr. Chavasse says that when the B.E.F. went to France in 1914 no objection was taken to French churches being used for Church of England services. He then goes on to speak from personal experiences as a chaplain, adding that sudden Army Orders asking this state of things to be stopped was made. He could not understand the Vatican at the time, but later learnt that it was the English Roman Catholics who pressed the Pope to take action, in order that on the Continent the Church of England might be made aware of its position as an heretical Church—and this in war time.

The Bishop reflects that the Roman Catholic Church refuses to allow its members to join in prayer with others when the essential of co-operation in prayer to God might well be made the test for co-operation with Rome in concerted action towards a New Christian Order.

He concludes: "There are many Roman Catholics who sincerely desire to co-operate with us, and would be by no means averse to praying with us. But in efforts towards this end, as with the 'Sword of the Spirit' movement, both they and we come up against an official attitude and policy that is the very antithesis of Christian Fellowship."

Prevalence of Spiritualism and Superstition

Superstition always prevails in time of war. We recall during the Spanish-American War Spanish Bishops blessed scapelars with the words, "Stop bullet—the Heart of Jesus will protect you." Now in England we find a belief in many superstitious beliefs and practices, such as mascots, astrological horoscopes, and other catch-penny designs upon the foolish and ignorant. The teaching of our Lord is incompatible with belief in any such superstitions. God rules and reigns. He alone can protect the souls that put their trust in Him, and anything that interferes with belief in Him is opposed to the plain message of Revelation. Spiritualism has revived, and never were there on sale so many books on the subject. Mediums are being consulted in all parts of the country to obtain news of missing friends and to open communication with them beyond the veil. Unfortunately, there is a large class of the public who need protection from their own folly. All acknowledge that a considerable element of charlatanism and dishonesty enter into spiritualistic sittings, that many have made use of them for the purpose of preying on the credulity of sorrow-stricken folk, and that the profits to be obtained from the profession of a medium may be very great. Our Police Courts tell of prosecutions of men and women who have no real claim to foretell the future or elucidate the past—much less to penetrate behind the veil and give an account of loved ones who have crossed from life on earth to a life that cannot be followed by mortal vision. We have known heart-broken parents move from place to place and spend time and money in the consultation of mediums. We have heard of foolish young people who have shaped their lives on the so-called revelations of the crystal-gazer, only to find disappointment await them. We are not blind to the strange facts of morbid psychology and the insoluble problems submitted to the research worker in the elusive field of the unconscious. The so-called "sensitives" are for the most part abnormal. They correspond to the patients in a hospital ward where we do not seek to find the best method of living life to its fullest activity. The science of health is very different from the cure of morbid pathological cases. This is even more the case with the psychical states that are unusual and are bound up with a temperament that is unbalanced. As far as we have been able to observe, men and women who have dabbled in spiritualism have lost

their efficiency, and some their reason. Many have warned others not to approach the study, as it leads to unhealthy-mindedness and a wrong perspective of life. It certainly has a pronounced tendency to lead men from Christ the true Light to follow the "will o' the wisps" that from time to time pretend to guide over the marshlands that have no path. Loss and perplexity are sure to follow the practice of spiritualism. We who have the guidance and promises of the Gospel have no room for vain speculations that pass with some for scientific truth. They are really the unproved hypotheses of speculators who have never seen life steadily and cannot see it whole. Rooted in trust in God and His Christ, we do not need "controls" or darkened rooms to bring us into the presence of the dead in Christ. We know they are safe in His presence and keeping. Beyond this a veil is drawn, until on the resurrection morn we meet them again.

Astrologers as "Fifth Columnists"

The Bishop of Winchester (Dr. C. F. Garbett) refers in the *Winchester Diocesan Leaflet* to the revival of astrology as "one of the strange freaks of this war." He writes:—

"Astrology is one of the oldest of superstitions. In the old pagan world it was the cause of intense depression as men felt they were powerless under the grip of influences due to the planets. Christianity did far more than the scoffing of the sceptic to deliver men from the cruel creed, that they were iron bound because they were born at the time when certain planets were in the ascendancy.

"Astrology makes three unfounded assertions. First, that the planets and stars have certain qualities—Venus, for instance, is the planet of love, Mars of war, and so on. The names and qualities attached to the planets are of human invention: there is not the slightest vestige of reason to connect the planet Venus with love, or Mars with war, or Saturn with evil. Secondly, the astrologer assumes that planets and stars influence men and affairs; there is no proof and never has been that the planets and stars have the slightest influence upon human beings, there are no facts or reasons to confirm this gigantic assumption, it is sheer nonsense, the outcome either of fantastic imagination or the desire to make money by trading on the credulity of the ignorant. Thirdly, the astrologer claims that he can predict the future through the movements of the stars. The complicated phraseology he uses is impressive, but is utterly hollow and meaningless. There is nothing to justify the claim that through the stars human destinies can be foretold.

"Sometimes the astrologer makes a lucky guess, and this is remembered while his errors are forgotten. More often his predictions are so vague and ambiguous that they give no definite guidance and are open to different interpretations. . . .

"I can think of no better guise for a fifth-columnist than that of the astrologer who declares that the stars show the future must be victorious. He is using a powerful secret weapon to encourage and justify apathy and indolence in working for the national cause."

A Call to Out-and-Outness and Reality

"If only all good Christians would give more prayer and would show more resolve to *be* something instead of doing something, the doing would follow all right." These words express a vital truth that needs emphasising at a time when we are all in danger of believing that energetic work is of more value than anything else. Too often we discover that in the doing, we find an end that very soon so absorbs us, that the motive for doing ceases to operate, and at a period of spiritual slackness we make an effort—frequently successful—to pass on to others the duty of "doing." The only true foundation for permanent activity in the causes that demand sacrifice is an inner and all-pervading belief that they are of God, and that in order to serve faithfully, we cannot neglect our duty. Organised external activity is an infective fussiness that is in danger of seeing in restlessness a desirable end. It is good from an advertising standpoint, for it challenges notice. It may, however, cease suddenly, and when the pressure of circumstances relaxes, there will be no devotion to any but selfish ends. Why have the Churches failed to hold the people who once filled them? Why is there a feeling of depression among some Church workers, when outside the Churches there is great activity? Have we not rather endangered our position by attempting to foster externalism, and by so doing have we not lost sight of Him Who summons us to take up our cross and follow Him? Is there not unreality in much public penitence that is expressed on platform and in pulpit? Some who observe Sunday repent for the Sunday desecration of others; those who are most studious repent for the lack of thought on the part of the idle; the most philanthropic repent for the hard-heartedness of the selfish, and even those who are the most keen on Christian union are the first to repent for the lack of the Spirit of Christ among other Christians. It is difficult to avoid so doing. The first duty is prayer that God should lead others from the sin that they commit, and not to offer vicarious repentance on their behalf. We all have our own sins to lament, and we ought to repent of them and by so doing get right with God. The time calls for out-and-outness and reality. Let us all try, with the help of God, to "be" what we ought to be, and then doing will come all right. We remem-

ber our Lord's words about doing the will of God, and, in doing it, finding the truth of the teaching of the Saviour. As long as we concentrate upon our work as real work for God, we cannot fail to attain union with Him through Christ, but the failure of so much of present-day activity arises from failure to remember that God should have first place in all our work.

A Needed Revival of the Prayer Meeting

Why have Prayer Meetings ceased to be living, efficient parts of our Church life? Prayer is an elementary Christian act, and united prayer is the inevitable and national expression of Faith and worship. Never at any time in Christian history was there more need of Prayer, and without Prayer there is stagnation and loss of vital religion. Have some Christians reached a stage at which Prayer is a superfluity? We read much concerning Prayer and the limitation of Prayer in connection with scientific discovery. "The reign of law" appears to have paralysed the prayer-gift of many. The duty of Prayer has been neglected. Bible study has been abandoned; Prayer Meetings have decayed. "Criticism," it is said, has killed the one, "Science" has slain the other, and our religion is in grave danger of becoming empty of content and without power—a mere emotion that supplies a need. We must get back to Prayer. God is the ruler and sustainer of the Universe. His Son teaches us that His Providence is over each one of us, and that nothing is too small for Him to notice, nor too great for Him to do. It is not Christian to proclaim a high ideal and to say that pursuit of this ideal with human effort is the one message of the Gospel. We who are "in Christ" dwell in God. He is our very life, and we have the inestimable privilege of being able to commune with Him, to make known our needs unto Him, assured that He will do all for us that is necessary for the body and the soul. Religious revival has always been nursed in prayer, and unless Christian congregations give themselves to united Prayer, pointed and specific, we cannot expect to experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in individual or collective spiritual life.

Prayer in the Home

Many of our readers are already aware of the activities of the Alliance, past and present, in the direction of the revival of Family Prayers—of Prayer in the homes of our people. A neat card (which can be kept within the pages of an ordinary Bible) is available (½d. each), providing suitable prayers, and suggestions for the conduct of brief daily worship in the home. In peace time the observance is desirable, and a testimony to parental recognition of God which cannot fail to impress throughout life those so nurtured and encouraged.

There is at this time, however, in the homes of England, to a degree that was never the case before, a dominant and prevailing desire almost swallowing up other things—a desire to remember in the very best way we can those who are fighting our battles for a great and sacred cause. The desire is there; it is almost universal, and this desire is at present dominant. Everyone is thinking—if they are not praying, every one is at least thinking—of sons and husbands, brothers and sisters, who may be far away. The fact of that being dominant just now does of itself serve to break down the natural and the instinctive shyness and reserve which is, perhaps, a national characteristic, but which has far too often kept us silent. But at this time we are all thinking of the same thing, we are caring for the same thing, and we can be, if we will be, praying for the same thing. That makes to a quite unwonted degree Family Prayers natural, obvious, and acceptable to all; and it should make those who have met with the same thought in their hearts, and the same hope, and the same inward Prayer, much less unready than they have ordinarily been to think and talk and act about it together, in the Home and in united gatherings elsewhere. "I have a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, a husband, a wife," someone says, engaged on national service; it may be at home or overseas. "So have I. Let us together ask God to keep those we love in His life and the life beyond." The natural difficulty, the shyness, the reserve which usually acts as a sort of intervening wall between us in these matters, crumbles away in the presence of the dominant desire, the dominant thought. The "walls of Jericho" are thrown down, and every man can go up straight before him. The difference between thinking and talking about Prayer, and joining together in Prayer, is like the difference between studying the complicated roadways on a map and going ourselves along the road together, side by side. That is made possible for us now in our homes, whether we would or no, made possible for us by what is happening in the world. God grant we may use the opportunity in *our homes*, as well as in our Churches and elsewhere.

World Mission Notes

State-Idolatry in the Far East.

No useful purpose can be served by turning the blind eye to Missionary problems, whether these arise from Roman Catholic intolerance or State authority. We make this remark having before us the magazine of one of our largest Missionary bodies, in which the leading article is devoted to the subject of "An Agreed Christian Order." This of course harks back to the spurious "Sword of the Spirit Movement" engineered by Cardinal Hinsley and his "Catholic" supporters with the benediction of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Federal Council of the Free Churches. By this time it may be that it is becoming realised that a great mistake was made; we sincerely hope this to be the case, but infection spreads, and the fact that the Missionary body concerned has identified itself with the Roman mischief-maker is not to its credit. Recent years have given much evidence of the baneful effects of Roman Catholic intolerance in the Mission fields. It is a long story, abundantly verified by the facts. The Missionary bodies have no reason to thank the Pope, or his Missionary predecessor, for anything, nor will they gain anything from withholding testimony to the essential distinction between the work and witness of Protestant and Roman Catholic Missions. We make these comments after receiving from the Ministry of Information the December issue of the widely circulated leaflet "The Spiritual Issues of the War," in which a considerable part is occupied with a review of what is described as "The New Phase of the War-Results of State Idolatry in the Far East."

A Major Missionary Concern.

We are face to face to-day with Anti-Christ, perhaps not *the* Antichrist, who is to come, but with preparations not entirely military, although supported by force and authority, for supplanting the Christian Church, and in fact Christianity, by the "doctrines of devils." So important has this become, and so evident in the case of Germany and Japan, that no instructed Christion can afford to look lightly upon the rapidly spreading threat to true religion. It has become a major missionary concern, and by the entrance of Japan into the world war issues are joined, and missionary counsels will need to be alert and widawake. So important is this matter that we quote rather fully from the article under review:

"Those who have followed with anxiety during recent years the development in Japanese policy in its bearing upon the work of the Christian Church, and have noted the strange similarities between the Church conflict in Germany and the Church conflict in territory under Japanese control, will be less surprised than others by the decisive aggressive steps now taken by Japan.

"The gradual encroachment of State authority upon the small but vigorous Christian Church both in Japan and on the mainland of Asia has been a major concern of missionary students for many years. The prominence attached to the Emperor-mythology, the strengthening of State Shinto, the attempts to turn the Christian schools into instruments of national militarist policy, the importance which the schools were compelled to attach to military studies, and most serious of all, the increasing separation of Japanese Christianity from its links with ecumenical Christianity as a whole, have combined to fill thoughtful students of Far East conditions with foreboding.

"A significant statement on all this is to be found in Dr. Paton's book, 'Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts,' which, though written in 1937, is extremely relevant to present events. We print a striking passage.

"'Conflict lies ahead; and it seems to me, influenced as one must be (and I think rightly so) by some knowledge of tendencies elsewhere in the world, that we are beholding in Japan the clearest instance in modern times of the regimentation of the State, in all its parts, round the idea of its own absolute sacredness. Already there are signs of interference with the intellectual liberty and integrity of the universities. Just as in Germany the Nordic obsession has produced the most amazing ethnological theories from otherwise eminent scholars, so in Japan we find arguments solemnly adduced to show that Japanese recorded history is twenty thousand years old. A committee was established some years ago to try to reach an understanding on the question of shrine-worship, but no agreement could be found, and the committee has now abandoned its task. In 1930 an informal conference took place between a leading Government official and a group of Christians, in which some searching questions were put in the desire to discover whether the Government, in stating that the rites were non-religious, based their statement upon a thorough examination of what took place in the shrines. This is the all-important question, and the simple truth is that it has been answered evasively in every official statement. None of the doubts, clearly and admirably expressed in that conference, seems to have been removed. On the contrary, there are now examples of the persecution of Christians as such. Inquirers and converts are sometimes exhorted to keep away from this internationalist and un-Japanese religion. Sometimes the influence of the military instructor,

even in Christian schools, is such that no Christian work is possible. I have heard of a teacher being arrested because, in reply to a child's question, he stated that Jesus was greater than the Emperor. A Christian in Kobe was imprisoned and severely dealt with because he denied that the Sun Goddess was divine and refused to worship the Emperor.

"'The feeling that behind all this is a policy of State-expansion, based upon the religious absoluteness of the State, is confirmed when one finds, as I did in Korea, that shrine-worship is being pressed there with even greater vigour than in Japan proper, and that it is enforced also in Formosa and in the mandated islands of the Pacific. For Christians in Korea a crucial situation immediately arises, for they have not the patriotic feeling for the Emperor and they regard the demand that they should engage in shrine-worship as tantamount to a demand that they should return to idolatry. In Korea earnest efforts have been made to reach a form of observance possible to Christian consciences and yet acceptable to the State—e.g., in which it might be made plain that the spirits of the heroes, believed to be present in the worship, are not so present—but the use of any such form has always been refused. The State demands its worship on its own terms.

"'I found myself driven to the conclusion that when a government, while urging that the required observances are patriotic and not religious, so steadily adheres to its demands, refusing alternative versions of its rites that would be free from religious misunderstanding, it really means that what it demands is *more important than religion*. Or, to put it in another way, it uses the word "religion" to denote sectarian and private cults; for its own observance it reserves that absoluteness and universality of range which belong to true religion.'"

A Missionary Re-affirmation. The splendid history and record of the Zenana Bible and Medical Mission has endeared it to friends of India's women and "Women's Work in India." For a generation the work of the Z.B.M.M. has been closely associated with the honoured name of Kinnaird, and to-day, one member at least of the family is actively associated with the Mission. One can turn with assurance and satisfaction to the Evangelical and Protestant witness of the Z.B.M.M., and quite recently the General Committee resolved that the following statement should be officially published as the basis upon which the Society and its operations stand:—

"1. We believe that there is one God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Three Persons in one God.

"(*a*) The Father Who is 'Eternal Immortal, Invisible';

"(*b*) The only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, eternally one with the Father, and manifested in the flesh for our salvation, is our Saviour, Redeemer and Mediator, through Whom alone we receive Eternal Life, Pardon and Sanctification;

"(*c*) The Holy Spirit Who was sent to convince the world 'of sin . . . of righteousness . . . of judgment,' to indwell the hearts of God's children, and to build up the Church of God in Christ.

"2. We accept the fact that all men by nature are 'dead in trespasses and sins,' and that all equally need Regeneration through the Atonement wrought by Christ Jesus in the shedding of His Blood upon the Cross.

"3. We hold the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God and the only and infallible test of Faith, and rule of conduct.

"Therefore we proclaim the Deity, Incarnation, Atoning and Propitiatory Sacrifice, Resurrection, Ascension and Personal Return of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Rationalism in the Mission Fields. There is reason for believing that, even in the Mission Fields, teaching opposed to the fundamentals of the Gospel is finding a footing. The Deity of our Lord is considered an open question and an emotional unitarianism or humanitarianism takes the place of the Truth of the Incarnation. When we are told that the Virgin Birth of our Lord and the resurrection of Lazarus are not literal facts, we are not surprised to hear that destructive views of the authority of Scripture are taught. We believe that the great majority of Missionaries are loyal to the Creeds of Christendom and have no sympathy with rationalism in its modernist dress; but it is sad if even a small minority propagate doctrine that can only end in the destruction of the simple faith of converts and the bewildering of their spiritual outlook.

Christianity the Final Religion. No Missionary can hope for success if he does not believe that the Faith he teaches is final. He very often is faced by Creeds that had their origin long before our era. He knows that these beliefs will have to disappear if his mission is successful. He may be influenced by the fact that in old-world faiths there are truths that are similar to those he proclaims. But he has the Christ, the Eternal Son of God, to press on the men and women that surround him as the one and only Saviour. He can trace perhaps the development of racial beliefs, but he must accept the Christian Revelation as from God for all men. For him the Bible must be the record of Divine Revelation, and if it is not then he has no real commission to the people he has come to serve. Departure from revealed truth in the

Mission Field is much rarer than at home, for a definite message is essential, and that must be sealed by God if the Missionary is to speak with authority. What perplexes some men at home has no difficulty for the Missionary, for he has seen the converting power of the Gospel. His calling is to live for conversions, and in this he teaches those at home a lesson some are only too slow to act upon.

The Universal Week of Prayer in Foreign Lands.

By universal consent nothing has been in Foreign Mission centres a greater bond of union than the Week of Prayer, when brother missionaries and their congregations meet and unite in Prayer together. Long before the reunion movement arrived the Week of Prayer was faithfully observed, and maintained that spirit of Christian love between the various branches of the Christian Church that has now become so general. Had it not been for the united Meetings isolation would have been customary. The recognition of the world observance and the united prayers of the Churches being directed towards the same ends gave to all who partake a Catholic spirit and a wider outlook. We at home often forget that native Christians must feel lonely, and to bring before their minds the joint supplication of men of all races is a missionary lesson of the greatest importance. We rejoice to know that in 1942 the week will be as widely observed in the Old as in the New World.

The Bible Society— Some Striking Facts.

Since its foundation in 1804 the Bible Society has issued more than 532,844,000 copies of the Scriptures, and of these about 120,284,000 have been in English. The Bible Society now issues Scripture portions in 747 different tongues. Six fresh tongues were added last year. The various Missionary bodies who teach the Gospel depend on the Bible House, which never refuses to issue a version in a language for any people that is being evangelised by Free Church or Anglican Church missions. Versions are circulated among immigrants. Among the prisoners of war and wounded in hospitals provision is made for every man obtaining a Bible in his mother tongue, and the curse of Babel is being mitigated as far as the Gospel message is concerned. Every man can read—who has been taught to read his mother language—what God has revealed. No one who turns over the pages of the marvellous Annual Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society can fail to recognise that the most widely circulated of all books is the volume which has been attacked by infidels, dissected by critics, and denounced as "out of date" by the worldly-wise. It has won its way because Truth is eternal and God speaks his Truth in its pages.

We quote from the Annual Report:—

"The foundations of the Bible Society were laid in time of war, and its fabric was reared amid storms that threatened the annihilation of liberty in Europe, as well as the destruction of religion itself. Now that Europe is again involved in war, with even more serious threats to freedom and faith, it is the Society's duty to redouble its efforts to place the Word of God in the hands of men. Further, the rapid growth of literacy in various lands opens up fresh fields of opportunity, and it is for the Society to ensure that the Bible is made available to everyone who can read. The tragedy of a world at war brings home to Christian minds the infinite importance of the Holy Scriptures to the temporal and eternal well-being of mankind."

"Fruitful in Affliction."

The Annual Report of the China Inland Mission bears this title. The C.I.M. has always been an organisation carried forward by spiritual men and women engaged in spiritual work. It has placed "first things" first, and has embraced Christians of all recognised denominations. Patiently and earnestly the Rev. J. Hudson Taylor laboured and faced difficulties that would have killed the enthusiasm of any man not alive with love to God and conscious that God was with him in the mission to which he had been called. The spirit of its founder lives in his successors and has been transmitted to the missionaries. They are out to win souls for Christ, to break down the false ideals of heathendom, and to bring men and women into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Much has been accomplished, but what has been done is only the earnest of the greater triumphs God will give His servants. We quote some concluding words from this interesting Report:—

"What is the need in China to-day?

The paramount need is for Bible teachers; those who can give not only a month or two of consecutive teaching, but longer courses suited to leaders in the churches who shall teach others also; those who can meet the needs of educated people, now more accessible than ever before; those also who will untiringly teach the women and girls the phonetic script and the character, thus enabling them to read the Word of God for themselves and to grow thereby. In hardly any part of the field can we overtake the work of Bible teaching in the churches, for no sufficient number of qualified Chinese Bible teachers is available. Other needs are pressing, this one is insistent, with an insistency that cannot, must not be denied, for whole Christian communities are crying out for *spiritual* food."

Books Worth Reading

CHURCH AND STATE IN FASCIST ITALY. By D. A. Binchy. (Oxford University Press. 31/6 net.)

This is a volume of outstanding interest and importance. It brings under review, both comprehensive and critical, the Lateran Treaty between the Holy See and the Italian State, the signing of which, some twelve years ago, was supposed to end the sixty-year-old breach between Church and State. Professor Binchy, throughout his study of a highly controversial subject, writes "for men of all faiths and no faith," and keeping largely in the background his own religious views, impartially discusses the merits and demerits of the deal which, we conclude, has not, at least so far, reacted in favour of the Church.

The two principal figures in the story, Pius XI and Il Duce, are each the subject of a vivid character sketch. To the ordinary reader, this section of the volume is of deep interest and highly informative. Protestants will read with misgivings the section devoted to the discussion of the subject of Minorities, all treated from the religious viewpoint of "proselytising sects." Even the Waldenses, whom Mussolini approved and promised to protect, come under critical and even, as we think, unfair conclusions, and their royal and splendid witness to the Gospel of Christ with its background of courage and constancy is disposed of with the remark that "the attempt to protestantise Italy by means of the so-called "Native Churches," has proved to be an expensive failure." The author is even more severe with his description of other Protestant forces and organisations in Italy, which, we are told, "have conducted an intense, although unfruitful campaign"; and Professor Binchy expresses his opinion "that the religious minorities never represented a serious problem in Italy." The chapter under review extends to an examination of the question whether "the religious liberty recognised to the admitted cults includes liberty of propaganda and proselytism among the Catholic population?"

Clearly a Protestant reply is called for, and we hope this will be forthcoming.

CHRISTIAN REUNION. By Hugh Martin. (S.C.M. Press. 6/-.)

This volume has been widely reviewed in the Press. It has excellent intentions, as would be expected from the author. Despite advance in the direction of Church Unity, and Mr. Martin includes in his volume a full account of what has been achieved, there is still much to be said and cause for action. In our opinion the crux of the whole matter lies in the direction of the basis of Christian Reunion. Mr. Martin makes it clear that he considered and has rejected the idea of making any tabulation of the beliefs held by varying Churches and Christian bodies. This, to our mind is the *summum bonum* of any discussion of the question of reunion, and the key is to be found in the two simple but pregnant words Truth and Love. This is the position of the Evangelical Alliance, and increasingly it is becoming evident that the furthering of "the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace, is the foremost call to the Church universal. Christian Fellowship is a vital need in these days, but it will not grow in sour or strange soil. It has been remarked that schism is separation from anyone in whom you acknowledge the Spirit of Christ to be dwelling. If Mr. Martin's treatise helps to throw down the walls of partition between Christians as such it will have accomplished much. It is an excellent book in every way, and should be read by all. We shall be forgiven, we hope, if we remark that the World's Evangelical Alliance finds no mention in its pages; nevertheless it is possible its universal influence, its substantial basis, and its well-known and oft quoted motto, "*Unum corpus sumus in Christo*," are what are necessary to give effect to Mr. Martin's aspirations.

EVANGELICAL UNITY. By E. J. Poole-Connor. (Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches, 30, John Street, W.C.1. 2/-.)

There is much in this little volume to attract, enlighten, and provide food for thought. "Undenominationalism" is an unattractive word, but its spirit and aim are not contrary to the New Testament conception of the Church of Christ. Mr. Poole-Connor makes this clear, and in his setting forth of the position held by those who are "unattached" and yet not in opposition to the Churches, he breathes an excellent spirit and reveals a wise mind. There is much in the volume about the Evangelical Alliance, and more to instruct and edify.

TEN STATESMEN AND JESUS CHRIST. By W. E. Sangster. (Hodder & Stoughton, 3/6.)

This volume by the Minister of the Central Hall, Westminster, is a Christian commentary on our war aims which has much to commend it. We recall the words "O see that ye build securely when the time for rebuilding comes." Mr. Sangster is anxious that we should rebuild with God, and much in his volume is thought-provoking, and directed to the ethics of the Gospel of Christ. We commend the book to all who wish to see a Christian State, in which Justice, Peace, Security and Freedom are substantial foundations.

THE BOOK OF FREEDOM (Band F.B.S., 6d.) is the Popular Report of the Bible Society, at this time of even more than usual interest. Rev. J. A. Patten is to be congratulated on both title and reading matter. It is indeed a cheap sixpennyworth. The Report ends with the touching story of a poor woman who had been badly bombed, and was lying in hospital with severe injuries. "Minister," she said to the Bishop who was visiting her, "I've lost my man, I've lost my bits of sticks, I've lost my home—I've lost everything." Then she produced from under her pillow a well-worn Bible, saying, "I told you a lie. I've got this to begin my new home with." With the Bible, concludes Mr. Patten, "we can begin not only a new home, but, in God's good time, a New World."